Information Management:
A common approach

July 2013
## Document Control

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### Approvals

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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### Document custodian

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 About this document

The purpose of this document is to provide a foundation for the Information Management Framework and to help agencies implement best practices for managing information across the NSW public sector.

This guidance outlines a common approach for NSW Government to:

- managing data and information; and
- implementing standards for data and information.

1.2 Information Management Framework

A key initiative of the **NSW Government ICT Strategy** is the development of an Information Management Framework (the IM Framework) to support the way government administers and uses data and information.

The Framework is a coherent set of standards, policies, guidelines and procedures which are implemented either manually or, where possible, automated through technology. This will allow data and information to be managed in a secure, structured and consistent manner.

It will ensure that data and information can be appropriately shared or re-used by agencies, individual public sector staff, the community or industry for better services, improved performance management and a more productive public sector. The Framework will continue to develop over time. Figure 1 below provides a snapshot of components which are currently in development.

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**Figure 1 - Information Management Framework**

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A Common Approach to Information Management and Standards

1.3 A common approach to information management

Data and information are resources of critical importance to NSW Government. They flow through every work process, impact every decision, and hold the potential for insight and innovation.

To realise their potential value, data and information must be managed strategically, in a coordinated and consistent approach across government.

This approach encourages agencies to recognise the value of their information assets. It assists them to build good information management practices into business-as-usual processes.

Accurate, reliable data and information will then be readily available to support evidence-based policy and effective service delivery. Common standards for information management support the exchange of information between agencies and facilitate streamlined management reporting.

The principles-based approach outlined in this document has been developed through consultation with agency and industry representatives, in line with best practices and the strategic direction of NSW Government.

The following table summarises the benefits of defining a common approach to information management and standards; and the risks of not doing so.

Table 1: Benefits of a common approach to information management and risks of non-adoption

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BENEFITS</th>
<th>RISKS</th>
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<tr>
<td>Agencies can adopt and implement the same standards or processes for ICT and IM projects across the public sector</td>
<td>Different agencies may adopt or implement a variety of standards and processes for ICT or IM projects – or may not apply standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relevant policies and standards are easier to identify</td>
<td>Each agency undertakes the same research to develop policies or identify standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easier to identify areas of potential overlap or duplication of effort</td>
<td>Opportunities for data sharing or pooling of resources may be overlooked</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possible to establish Centres of Excellence, training or workshops to share and build on common experience</td>
<td>Each agency invests resources to follow the same learning curve by trial, error and review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manage public expectations about the quality and availability of government data or information</td>
<td>Public may experience variable degrees of quality and availability; may hold unrealistic expectations</td>
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</table>
2. IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW

The approach outlined in this document will inform the development of the Information Management Framework. It will inform the development of policies and the identification of relevant standards for use across NSW Government.

Specific guidelines in support of particular policies or standards may be issued as part of the broader IM Framework.

The guidance in this document may also be of assistance to agencies in drafting internal policies and procedures, or implementing standards for data and information management according to their specific business needs and operating environment.

Some examples of ways in which this guidance might be used by agencies include:

- to understand or explain the rationale behind the Information Management Framework;
- developing or evaluating information management practices in the agency, to determine whether key systems or processes are being effectively managed;
- as text to be included in a project plan, business case or funding request, linked to the NSW Government ICT Strategy.

This approach is subject to review every two years, or as appropriate.

3. SCOPE

This guidance applies to all NSW Government Departments, Statutory Bodies and Shared Service Providers. It is recommended for use by State Owned Corporations, particularly where the organisation has adopted or is subject to any of the documents indicated in Appendix A.
4. APPROACH TO INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

Technology is now an integral part of daily life and doing business. Across the public sector, staff at all levels are required to handle information assets in the course of routine operations, at multiple points in the lifecycle. It is essential that information management support is seamlessly integrated into systems and work processes.

The goal of information management is to enable organisations to control and administer information assets throughout their lifecycle – that is, to capture, distribute, use, maintain and dispose of data and information in a secure, efficient and accountable manner.

The NSW Government approach to data and information management is structured around key stages of the information lifecycle. The principles of this approach have been framed in terms of intended outcomes for NSW Government agencies, citizens and organisations.

By considering the desired outcomes across all stages of the lifecycle, data and information can be managed in support of better service delivery and better value investment.

Figure 2 below illustrates the outcomes-based approach to information management. These principles provide high-level direction for managing NSW Government data and information in support of better services and better value investment.

\[\text{Figure 2 - Information Management Outcomes}\]
5. **PRINCIPLES**

NSW Government will adopt an outcomes-driven approach to data and information management, based on the following seven principles. NSW Government data and information are:

| Governed | as assets of strategic, operational and administrative value to NSW Government agencies;  
|          | in a manner that is transparent and accountable to NSW citizens and organisations. |
| Collected | to document or facilitate delivery of services and the functions of NSW Government agencies;  
|          | with respect for the privacy of NSW citizens and the confidentiality of NSW organisations;  
|          | once, according to agreed standards that support relevance, accuracy and consistency so they are fit for purpose reliable, and can be, where appropriate, re-used by NSW Government agencies to improve service delivery or management reporting. |
| Organised | described and linked to related data or information, so they are easy for NSW Government agencies to search, retrieve, use and compare;  
|          | identified and integrated into systems that allow NSW Government agencies to routinely track and manage them according to their value. |
| Secured  | against unauthorised access, alteration, loss or deletion, to ensure their integrity and ongoing value to NSW Government agencies;  
|          | using controlled and auditable processes that demonstrate to NSW citizens and organisation the protection of sensitive data and information. |
| Used     | to support planning, decision making, resource allocation, reporting, communications and transactions by NSW Government agencies;  
|          | processed and analysed by NSW Government agencies to develop evidence-based policy and deliver targeted services to NSW citizens and organisations;  
|          | and re-used, so NSW Government agencies derive maximum benefit from their investment in these assets. |
| Shared   | with respect for the privacy of NSW citizens and the confidentiality of NSW organisations;  
|          | with other NSW Government agencies to reduce duplication of effort, streamline service delivery and provide a consolidated view of customer needs or public sector performance;  
|          | published and made available for discovery, where appropriate, by NSW citizens and organisations, providing opportunities to communicate, consult and collaborate or to engage in value-added processing, analysis and development. |
| Maintained | using cost-effective, risk-based measures that facilitate business continuity for NSW Government agencies;  
|          | to ensure their availability and reliability, for as long as they support service delivery and accountability by NSW Government agencies; and then systematically destroyed when their use and value has ceased, to minimise the costs and risks to NSW Government agencies of over-retention;  
|          | or systematically archived to protect the enduring rights and interests of NSW citizens and organisations. |
6. **APPROACH TO STANDARDS**

The IM Framework seeks to employ a collaborative approach to the use of data and information standards. Standards and policies will be incorporated into the Framework where existing or potential business needs and opportunities are recognised. Agencies will refer to the Framework, seeking standards that are applicable to a specific project, process or corporate objective.

This interaction will enable ongoing development of the Framework in response to agency needs. Standardisation will be attractive where it helps to maximise the use and value of information or minimise the cost and risk associated with information.

Mandatory directives should only be issued where there is a high-level risk or benefit associated with overall consistency across NSW Government. Information security provides an example of one area where a uniform strategy offers significant advantages.

Figure 3 below illustrates the collaborative, business-driven approach to standards.

![Figure 3 – Criteria for Data and Information Management Standards](image)

NSW Government strives for best practice data and information management. Standards must also acknowledge a current state, providing for phased implementation or incremental development as time, resources and system capability allow.

Data and information management must be addressed enterprise-wide. Standards will provide support for:

- people (their roles, rights, responsibilities);
- processes (including policies procedures and metrics); and
- technology (for efficient search, sharing and information management).
Where possible, the Framework will identify existing standards that are in use – either within NSW agencies, similar jurisdictions or in a relevant industry sector. Standards should be accepted, proven, and require limited (if any) modification to be implemented in NSW Government.

Standards will be agreed and endorsed through the appropriate working groups and communities, and approved through the governance arrangements established under the NSW Government ICT Strategy.

Identified standards, policies and guidelines will continue to be published to ensure the IM Framework aligns with agency needs and accords with recognised best practices.

Key resources will be made available through a single portal, providing links to the sources of authority for managing data and information across all stages of the lifecycle.

7. CRITERIA

NSW Government will adopt a business-driven approach to standards for data and information, based on the following five criteria.

Standards incorporated into the IM Framework are:

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<th>Criteria</th>
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| **Aligned**    | - align with the information management principles, so they are connected to corporate outcomes and strategic direction;  
                 - enable the information management principles to be put into practice and realised. |
| **Relevant**   | - are relevant to the specific business needs, objectives and operating environment of NSW Government agencies, so that their business value is evident;  
                 - address an identified requirement, risk or opportunity for information management. |
| **Proven**     | - have been proven, demonstrated or established in practical setting, so they require minimal customisation to be implemented;  
                 - are endorsed or accepted by the relevant industry sector or professional community. |
| **Aspirational** | - aspire to best practice data and information management, recognising the value of continuous improvement;  
                          - build on a working baseline, through support for phased implementation or incremental development. |
| **Enterprise-wide** | - may impact any aspect of agency operations, so data and information management requirements are addressed enterprise-wide;  
                         - provide support and guidance for developing people, processes and technology. |
8. RELATED GUIDANCE

This document is consistent with:

- guidance provided by the NSW State Records Authority on responsibilities for records management;
- guidance provided by the NSW Information and Privacy Commission on responsibilities for information access and privacy; and

9. CONTACT

For assistance with any aspect of this document, please contact:

Principal Policy Officer (Information), Strategic Policy Department of Finance & Services
McKell Building, 2-24 Rawson Place, SYDNEY NSW 2000
(02) 9372 8291
APPENDIX A – RELATED DOCUMENTS

Legislation

Legislative instruments relating to information management in NSW Government include:

- State Records Act 1998 (NSW)
- Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 (NSW) (GIPAA)
- Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 (NSW)
- Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002 (NSW)
- Copyright Act 1968 (Cth)

Australian and International Standards

This approach aligns with accepted standards and best practices, including:

- AIIM (Association for Information and Image Management) approach to information governance
- Australian Standard AS/ISO 15489 – Records management
- ISO 16175 Principles and Functional Requirements for Records in Electronic Office Environments
- MIKE2.0 (Method for an Integrated Knowledge Environment) open source methodology for enterprise information management
- NSW Intellectual Property Management Framework for the NSW Public Sector Guidelines
- Standard on Digital Recordkeeping, Standard on Full and Accurate Records, Standard on Managing a Records Management Program, and all related standards issued by State Records NSW

Policies, strategies, guidance

This approach supports information management policies, strategies and guidance in effect or accepted for use in NSW, including:

- ABS Data Quality Framework Cth (2009)
- Information Security Management Guidelines – Australian Government Security Classification System (Cth) (July 2011)
- M2012-10 Open Government
- NSW Data and Information Custodianship Policy
- NSW Government ICT Strategy