Information Management Strategy

2023-2026

"Managing information as an asset ensures it can be trusted and relied upon, enabling improved government decision-making and better service delivery to South Australians."

In the *Information Management Strategy 2019-2022*, State Records of South Australia (State Records) introduced a new approach to the management of government information, focusing on treating information as an asset of government, ensuring that it is trusted, authentic and reliable.

The *Information Management Strategy 2023-2026* (Strategy) continues to strengthen, and build upon this approach, and reaffirms State Records' commitment to support agencies to achieve the objectives and meet the information management principles required under this Strategy and in the *Information Management Standard* (Standard).

Records, information or data are now commonly referred to as 'information assets' acknowledging the value these hold in the effective delivery of government functions and services. This term incorporates the definition of official record as defined by section 3(1) of the *State Records Act 1997* (SR Act), which includes information, data and records, in any format (whether digital or hardcopy), where it is created or received through the conduct of government business.

The focus for the next four years will be on supporting agencies to improve their information governance maturity and capability. This will be determined by assessing how well their current information management practices comply with the principles and behaviours set out in the Standard.

To assist with improving agencies overall information governance maturity and capability, State Records has developed:

  » an *Information Governance Guideline* (Guideline) that expands upon the behaviours underpinning the Standard, offering guidance on the necessary structure and rigor to manage information assets; and

  » a *Self-Assessment Tool* to assess current information management practices against the Standard.

Together we can improve the quality and accessibility of government's information assets.

Stephanie Coleman
Director
State Records of South Australia

Information Management Strategy 2023-2026

Vision

Trusted government information assets are created, maintained and are accessible to enable better decision making and improve services.

Purpose

The Strategy establishes the principles that agencies must follow to ensure their information assets can be trusted and relied upon.

The Strategy also establishes the:

» capabilities agencies must consider when managing information assets, and

» objectives agencies need to achieve to manage their information assets effectively and efficiently.

To assist agencies with achieving these objectives, State Records will progress a number of goals and actions, which are also outlined in this Strategy.
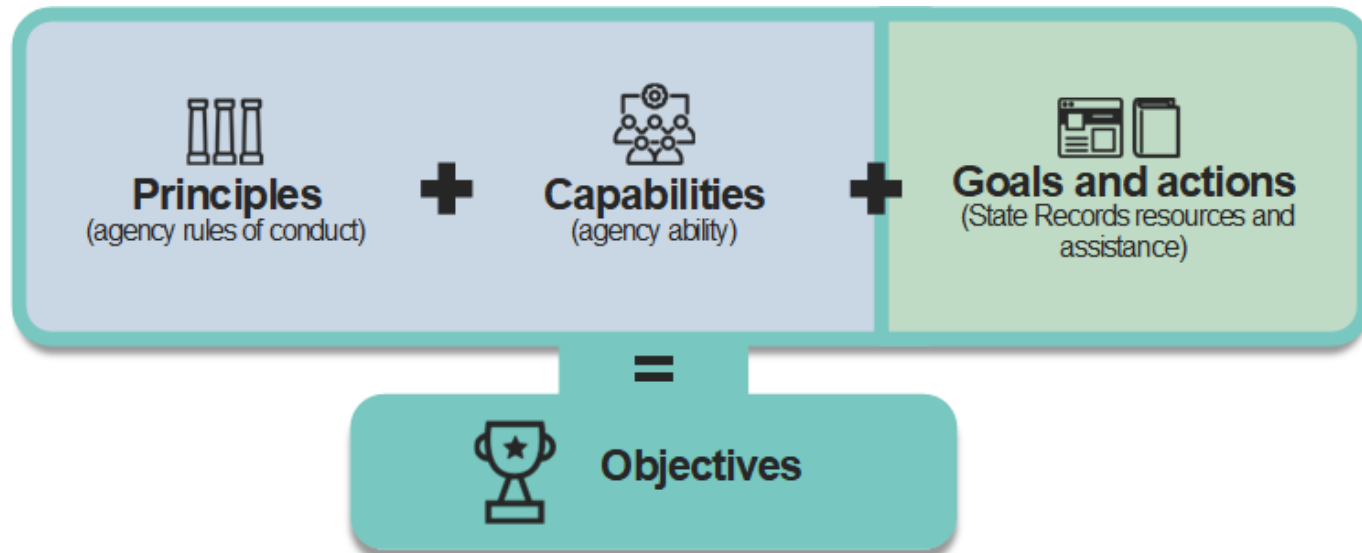
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Principles

To ensure that information assets are trusted, authentic and reliable, agencies must adopt the following principles.

Principle 1
The value of information is known

Information is treated as an asset of the agency: its value to enable business activities and functions, both current and future, is determined, understood and leveraged to improve business outcomes.

Principle 2
Information assets are created and managed appropriate to risk

Agencies understand what information needs to be created and maintained to support business objectives, meet compliance obligations and mitigate risk.

Principle 3
Ownership of information assets is assigned

Responsibility for the governance of information assets is assigned appropriately in order to ensure information assets are managed for the best outcomes of the agency, its customers and the broader community.

Principle 4
Information assets can be relied upon

Policies, practices and systems are implemented that ensure information assets can be relied upon as trusted and authentic evidence of decisions made and actions taken.

Principle 5
Information assets are available as required

Information assets are accessible for as long as needed and are shared appropriately (subject to access, security and privacy rules) within a protected and trusted environment.

Capabilities

Agencies must seek to continuously improve the management and control of their information assets. Only through ensuring information can be trusted and accessible can its potential value be reached.

There are four key capabilities that agencies must balance in order for information assets to be valued and trusted.

Policy

There must be an overarching and consistent policy approach that enables agencies to operate flexibly

Platform

Technology is a key enabler and must be fit-for-purpose, secure from external threats (including cyber) and support business and customer needs

People

Employees must understand the value of the information they create and receive and have the capability and capacity to manage it appropriately

Practice

Processes supporting the management of government information assets must be efficient and effective

These capabilities must be considered and implemented through a Program, as prescribed by the Standard, and expanded upon in the Guideline.

The relevant components of the Program are:

Information Management Program

1. Information Asset Audit

2. Value and Risk Assessment

3. Information Management Plan

3.1 Policy and Procedure

3.2 Defined Resources, Roles and Responsibilities

3.3 Access and Release Schemes

3.5 Privacy Protection and Considerations

3.4 Security Controls

3.6 Disposal Determinations

3.7 Compliant Systems

4. Education

5. Self-Assessment and Reporting

Collectively, these elements will assist to develop a clear strategic direction for the management of information assets as well as foster a good information management culture with a view towards continuous improvement.

A Program should support broader strategic and corporate goals and objectives, carrying the same executive level commitment.

There are a number of steps to follow to develop and implement a Program:

1. Information Asset Audit

Undertake an information asset audit to identify what information assets are held. The identified information assets must be linked back to the business activities and functions.

2. Value and Risk Assessment

Assess and value what information assets should be created to support an agency's business and regulatory requirements. To do this, consider legal and regulatory requirements, associated risks and business objectives. Identify and manage risks associated with not creating information assets to support requirements. This can be achieved by undertaking a value and risk assessment.

3. Information Management Plan

An Information Management Plan (Plan) provides practical direction for implementing a Program. The Plan should be based on the outcomes of the information asset audit and value and risk assessment and identify information priorities.

4. Education

Induct and train staff on the Program. A large part of the success of a Program relies on the commitment of staff to information management policies and procedures and an awareness of their information management responsibilities.

Educating staff in the value and management of information is key to fostering a culture of good information management.

5. Self-assessment and Reporting

Continue to formally assess and review the Program using the Tool. This assessment can also assist agencies to understand gaps in their Program and can be used as a first step in the review of the Program.

State Records' Goals and Actions

The focus for State Records is to assist agencies to improve their overall information governance capability and maturity. The tables below outline State Records' goals and actions for the next four years:

GOAL   Information governance and direction is planned and managed

Actions

Monitor agencies information governance maturity and capability and provide advice and tools to help improve information management practices.

Explore Indigenous Data Sovereignty for information assets about Aboriginal communities, peoples, lands and resources.

Establish policies that take a privacy-by-design approach to the handling of personal information.

Advocate for changes to legislation if restrictive of information being managed in a digital format.

Assist agencies to identify their information assets, understand their value and manage them accordingly.

Provide tools to enable the assessment of agencies information management maturity and capability, and associated business risks.

Encourage agencies to manage information assets digitally and to stop printing and filing.

Promote methods for agencies to assign internal responsibility for, and stewardship of, information and hold people accountable for its management.

Establish policies that take an enterprise-wide approach to the management of agencies information assets, removing unnecessary distinctions between data and records.

Collaborate with relevant agencies to ensure their information assets are protected and secure against incidents, disasters and compromise.

GOAL   Information is used and shared

Actions

Advocate for access to records of relevance to Aboriginal People.

Foster sharing of data and information across government.

Set standards that ensure government information can be relied upon to provide the evidence for making astute and timely decisions.

Explore mechanisms for agencies to manage, find and locate data across multiple systems.

GOAL   Preservation of information is assured

Actions

Seek to implement technology that supports the long-term preservation and accessibility of government information (including Digital archives).

Explore distributed custody models for permanent value information assets to support improved accessibility and preservation of government information.

Provide guidance on preservation and migration policies needed when designing line-of-business systems.

Objectives

It is recognised that agencies continue to work towards improving their overall information management governance capability and maturity. In managing their information assets effectively and efficiently to ensure they are trusted and can be relied upon, agencies will:

1. **Manage digital information assets digitally**
    Digital information is only printed if there is a specific reason for keeping hardcopy records (e.g. legal), thereby enabling improved access for government and customers. Information assets created on paper are scanned (where efficient) and the source document destroyed in accordance with General Disposal Schedule 21.

2. **Share information**
    Agencies share information appropriately (subject to legislation and any access, security and privacy rules) across a connected government, and with the community, ensuring sensitive information is appropriately restricted.

3. **Govern information assets well**
    Information is managed as an asset and stored appropriately. Agencies know what information they hold, where it is located, and what its value is to their business, the government and the community. Roles and responsibilities for managing information are identified, assigned and monitored. Staff are inducted and trained in the value of information and in their information management responsibilities.

4. **Information assets are managed according to risk**
    Agencies understand what information is needed to operate effectively and comply with their operational and regulatory obligations. Risks for failing to make or keep information are assessed and mitigated. All information assets must be managed and stored appropriate to their format and sensitivity and in accordance with relevant Standards[1] and whole of government Frameworks[2] to protect from compromise[3]. Information is destroyed, or preserved as part of the State's archive, in accordance with approved disposal determinations under the SR Act.

5. **Ensure transparency**
    Processes and systems are implemented that ensure information assets are created and maintained that can be relied upon as trusted and authentic evidence of decisions made and actions taken.

By adopting the principles and meeting the capabilities above – in conjunction with the implementation of State Records Goals and Actions, the South Australian government

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[1] Information Management Standard, Managing Digital Records in Systems Standard, Minimal Recordkeeping Metadata Standard, Contracting and Information Assets Standard and Management and Storage of Temporary Value Information Assets Standard.
[2] South Australian Protective Security Framework (SAPSF) and South Australian Cyber Security Framework (SACSF).
[3] Compromise - includes, but not limited to, loss, misuse, interference, unauthorised access, unauthorised modification, unauthorised disclosure.

will ensure these objectives are met and an organisational culture is fostered that values information as an asset and supporting business needs.

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