

Information Assets in the Government of Alberta: A Management Framework - Summary

The Issue

Information is an important strategic asset for the government — as important as people, capital and technology. Like other corporate assets, information must be managed.

The Government of Alberta's Information and Technology Strategy, adopted by the Deputy Ministers' Committee in 2001, recognized the need for improved management of information assets. Specific themes in the strategy related to improving access to information and services, improved accountability and skills development for staff in managing information, and improved sharing of information to realize its strategic value to the government. More recently, the Government of Alberta Enterprise Architecture also called for a more disciplined and consistent approach to the use of information and information technology to support business objectives.

Information Management (IM) involves the planning, directing and controlling of all of the government's information assets to meet corporate goals and to deliver programs and services. Currently, there are a number of communities of information professionals that support information management in government. Each community of practice reflects a different emphasis of the government's business interests. There is a **need for greater coordination** across the various professional communities and more **consistent** practices related to managing information assets, at both the ministry and corporate levels. Otherwise, the government risks losing corporate memory, not being able to meet its legal obligations, and failing in its commitment to provide Albertans with improved access to information and services.

The Response

This Corporate Information Management Framework, approved by the Deputy Ministers' Committee in 2003, is meant to guide a **disciplined** approach to managing information assets that is **consistent** across the government. Its focus on information content and the use of information will enable the government to capitalize on the value of its information assets.

Key Themes of the Framework

- **Accountability.** Managing information is everyone's responsibility. Accountability at the ministry level and at the corporate level will ensure adequate resources and attention are devoted to the management of this key corporate asset.
- **Establishing a disciplined approach.** This framework provides a more consistent and disciplined approach to information management across government.
- **Flexibility.** The framework has been developed to be robust enough to account for the wide variety of information activities that occur across the government and to apply in the context of continual reorganization, re-engineering and renewal of government programs and services.
- **Working smarter and working together.** The framework has been developed to support increased sharing and cooperation across ministries and with those who have corporate responsibilities for information management, and optimization of both the current and future value of our information assets.

Corporate Information Management Framework Summary

Vision	<i>The Government of Alberta will manage its information in a disciplined and coordinated manner to optimize the value of our investment in information assets, support effective and efficient operations and improve the delivery of services to Albertans.</i>					
Principles	Accessibility	Usability	Accountability	Integrated Approach	Planned and Coordinated Approach	Optimize the Value of Information Assets
	Information is easily accessible to those who need it and are authorized to access it.	Information meets the needs of employees, clients, partners and stakeholders and is timely, relevant, accurate and easy to use.	Accountability for the management of information in the custody or under the control of each ministry is clearly defined.	Information assets are managed throughout their entire life-cycle regardless of the medium in which they are held.	Coordinated planning for the management of information is linked to business and budget planning.	Information assets will be managed to optimize the investment of the Government of Alberta.
Directives	<p>1.1 Ministries must ensure that information systems are designed and implemented to easily locate and retrieve information, and to facilitate sharing the information within ministries, across government, with other levels of government and with Albertans, subject to legal constraints.</p> <p>1.2 Ministries must develop access standards and practices, including practices for routine disclosure of information. Ministries must ensure that all employees understand the access standards and have the skills to implement them.</p> <p>1.3 Ministries must establish plans for the electronic delivery of information to stakeholders and the public, including standards for service level commitments.</p>	<p>2.1 Ministries must establish and apply quality control procedures to ensure the information they produce is based on the demonstrated needs of users, is accurate and reliable, and is easy to use.</p> <p>2.2 Ministries must establish procedures to regularly review the value of information products and services for intended users, including the disposition of information that is no longer useful.</p> <p>2.3 Ministries must assess opportunities for leveraging the value of information through cross-ministry sharing of information, combining information from several ministries to create new information products, and ensuring that existing information is available to meet new business challenges.</p>	<p>3.1 Ministries must designate an “executive champion” responsible for information management within the ministry.</p> <p>3.2 Ministries must develop accountability structures related to information management practices.</p> <p>3.3 Ministries must implement assessment processes to evaluate progress in implementing information management.</p>	<p>4.1 Ministries must implement plans and practices related to the life-cycle of information — creation, capture or collection; organization; storage; access and use; and disposition (destruction or permanent retention).</p> <p>4.2 Ministries must ensure that information, regardless of type or the medium in which it is stored, is managed under the same principles and is captured in appropriate systems so that information can be organized and described to facilitate access and ongoing management of the asset.</p> <p>4.3 Ministries must identify core competencies related to information management and provide skills development opportunities to ensure staff acquire these competencies.</p>	<p>5.1 Ministries must integrate information management planning into the business and budget planning cycle, highlighting major IM strategies in the annual ministry business plan.</p> <p>5.2 Ministries must ensure that a coordinated approach is taken to information management such that the expertise of various IM disciplines is brought together to support business units in the implementation of information management practices.</p> <p>5.3 Ministries must integrate information planning into succession plans to ensure the capture and maintenance of corporate history.</p>	<p>6.1 Ministries must identify intellectual property assets that are information-based to be protected in business transactions.</p> <p>6.2 Ministries must ensure that business continuity plans include the identification of vital records, disaster recovery procedures for information, and information aspects of business resumption plans.</p> <p>6.3 Ministries, in cooperation with the Provincial Archives, must ensure that information created by government that is of permanent and enduring value is preserved.</p>
Legislation						
Government of Alberta Policies on Information Management						
Information Management Standards and Practices						