

Information and records management strategy

1 Purpose of an information and records management strategy

Information and records are key strategic assets of an organisation. These assets need to be actively managed to maintain and improve value. Information and records management assets take many forms, including data and business systems. A strategy will guide an organisation to make its current operations more effective by managing information and records.

An information and records management strategy focuses on leadership, accountability and responsibility. It gives a commitment to setting objectives and to regularly reviewing, monitoring and improving organisational performance. It is a high-level statement outlining an organisation's systematic approach to managing information and records.

The strategy is the key document of an organisation's governance of its information and records management. It provides a long-term and organisation-wide approach to managing the organisation's information and records assets. It guides the management of information and records across all operational environments of an organisation.

A strategy identifies and explains:

- the importance of information and records to the organisation's business – especially its core business
- the responsibilities for information and records management
- the risks of not managing information and records
- how the strategy fits with applicable laws, standards, business plans and other strategic requirements for an organisation
- how the strategy covers information and records in all formats and locations.

The strategy anticipates and articulates what the organisation will need from its information and records assets over the long term. The strategy maybe a standalone document or integrated with wider or related strategies.

2 Establishing an information and records management strategy

Establishing an information and records management strategy starts with:

- appraising the current situation and status of the organisation's information and records management environment
- writing a statement or vision of the ideal state of information and records management
- identifying the gap between ideal and current
- understanding what is driving the need for change or improvement
- identifying the directions taken so far
- identifying what resources and technologies are available to implement the desired objectives or directions
- setting concrete goals for developing implementation plans and policies.

The key areas to analyse within the organisation are:

- **Information and records governance** – overall governance, strategic direction and risks for information and records management.

- **Information and records value** – unlocking the value through use and reuse of information and records.
- **Information and records assets** – managing information and records as an asset, and classifying and cataloguing it.
- **Legislative compliance** – ensuring legislative and regulatory requirements is met in the handling of the information and records.
- **Data management** – managing and maintaining the data that underlies information and records.
- **Information and records privacy and security** – confidentiality, integrity and availability of information and records.

3 Making an information and records management strategy successful

To be effective, an organisation’s information and records management strategy must:

- be endorsed and promoted by senior management
- align with the organisation’s other objectives, strategies and risk management programmes
- link with the organisation’s overall business directions, as well as the wider sector
- link with the organisation’s plans for information and communications technology
- cover privacy, security and data management
- identify clear benefits for the organisation arising from the strategy
- contain solid performance targets, indicators and goals (to be reviewed regularly so they remain relevant to the organisation’s operations and business objectives, to legal accountability, and to community expectations)
- reflect all-of-government strategies, policies’ and requirements where appropriate.

4 Example components of an information and records management strategy

The table below sets out the minimum components to include in an effective information and records management strategy. The table includes an explanation and examples where appropriate.

Component	Example/s and explanation where appropriate
Purpose and scope	
Vision	<p>Example</p> <p>Our organisation aims to be trustworthy in the way we use and manage information and records. We fully exploit the value as strategic assets to deliver better government accountability and improved service delivery to the community.</p>
Reason for change and improvement; business drivers	<p>Explanation</p> <p>An organisation should base its reasons for change and improvement, and its business drivers, on an appraisal of the current environment and the status of information and records management in the organisation. This is the time when an organisation identifies any successes, challenges, gaps and risks.</p> <p>Examples of what to include in this component</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong rationales support the need to treat the information and records as key organisational assets. • Information and records management should be embedded in business activities and not function in a silo or as an end in itself. • Need for information and records management to align with what’s

Component	Example/s and explanation where appropriate
	<p>happening at the all-of-government level, and for it to support other strategies at a sector or all-of-government level.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal obligations. • Identify the risks of not having an effective information and records management strategy.
<p>Objectives</p> <p>Note: Meet these objectives by defining key goals and developing and implementing action plans.</p>	<p>Examples of objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support more efficient and effective business practices to achieve outcomes. • Support the public's right to access, use and reuse government information and records. • Raise the profile of information and records and improve information and records management capability and culture. • Identify outcomes arising from Treaty of Waitangi/Te Tiriti o Waitangi obligations. • Respond to increasing demand for information sharing and interoperability across government. • Manage the growth in information and records created and used. • Manage unstructured information. • Maximise opportunities for generating economic value from government information and records. • Comply with changing legislative and regulatory requirements.
<p>Key goals (outcomes)</p>	<p>Examples to consider when compiling outcomes</p> <p><i>A clear governance, authorising and accountability environment for information and records</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information and records governance arrangements are in place. • Responsibility for managing information and records is assigned. • Information and records management is planned and integrates with corporate business strategies and outcomes, the ICT Strategic Action Plan and long-term investment plans. • The environment meets the organisation's information and records management legal, regulatory and cultural responsibilities. <p><i>Improved information and records management capability and practice</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proactive information and records management capability and practice help to improve the skills of staff. • Endorsed better practices are in place. Information and records systems collect and retrieve the information needed for the organisation's work. • Better core business processes that embed effective information and records management practice have helped to reduce duplication of work and product. <p><i>Improved access to and use of the organisation's information and records</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The right information and records is available to the right person, at the right time, in the right format, at the right place, to enable open and accountable government, a better-informed public, and improved business decisions. • The information and records needs of governing and associated bodies (such as Ministers, Councils and Boards) are met.

Component	Example/s and explanation where appropriate
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information and records are easier to find. • The safe use and reuse of personal information and records is maximised. <p><i>Information and records treated as a valued asset</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organisation information and records needs are defined. • The organisation can readily exchange information and records across government, and externally when appropriate. • The value of information and records is unlocked by providing opportunities for reuse.
Implementation plan	<p>Explanation</p> <p>The implementation plan outlines measurable activities or actions needed to achieve the key goals of the high-level strategy, and timeframe and resources allocated to it. The strategy should document who will be responsible for ensuring that it is implemented.</p> <p>Examples of what to include in this component</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A list of actions for short-term, medium-term and long-term goals and targets. • Highlight where consultation and interaction are required with other areas of the organisation. • Highlight where consultation and interaction are required with external parties.
Measuring success	<p>Explanation</p> <p>Measuring success helps to ensure that an information and records management strategy translates into results. The strategy should document who will be responsible for progress monitoring and reporting.</p> <p>Example of what to include in this component</p> <p>A yearly assessment of information and records management maturity against accepted maturity models. The organisation can use the results of these assessments to revise its information and records management strategy and actions as it works towards its goals. This measurement can incorporate, align with, and support maturity assessments by external regulators.</p>
Approval, date of publication, and review	<p>Explanation</p> <p>A review cycle should be included in the information and records management strategy to ensure its continued relevance.</p>