

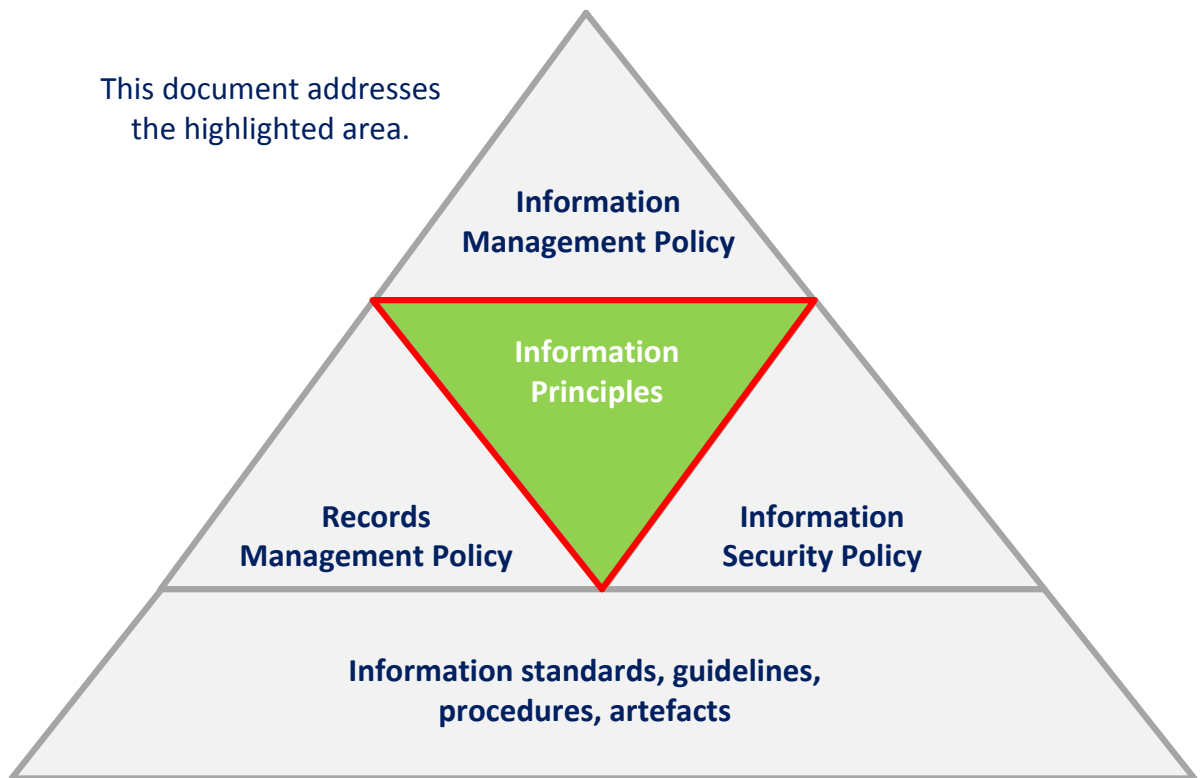


Information Principles

Summary: These information principles are intended to set direction for the management of information across FACS

FACS Information Management Policy Framework

This document addresses the highlighted area.



Document approval

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1 Why this document is important

Information is, more than ever, essential to the delivery of better and more integrated services to clients. Information is needed to make evidence based decisions and inform policy development, as well as to ensure accountability to parliament and the public. Information can be used to drive efficiency and service improvement, enhancing services, whilst at the same time reducing inefficiencies and improving value for money. There is increasingly a drive to transform public services through transparency and openness, thus enabling innovation and empowering individuals to choose and influence services. Information supports the FACS vision of empowering people to live fulfilling lives and achieving their potential in inclusive communities.

Given the importance of information to FACS, there is clearly a need for it to be consistently and effectively managed, protected and used. FACS' information also needs to be protected from loss, unauthorised access and inappropriate use to reduce any risk arising from information being exposed or misused.

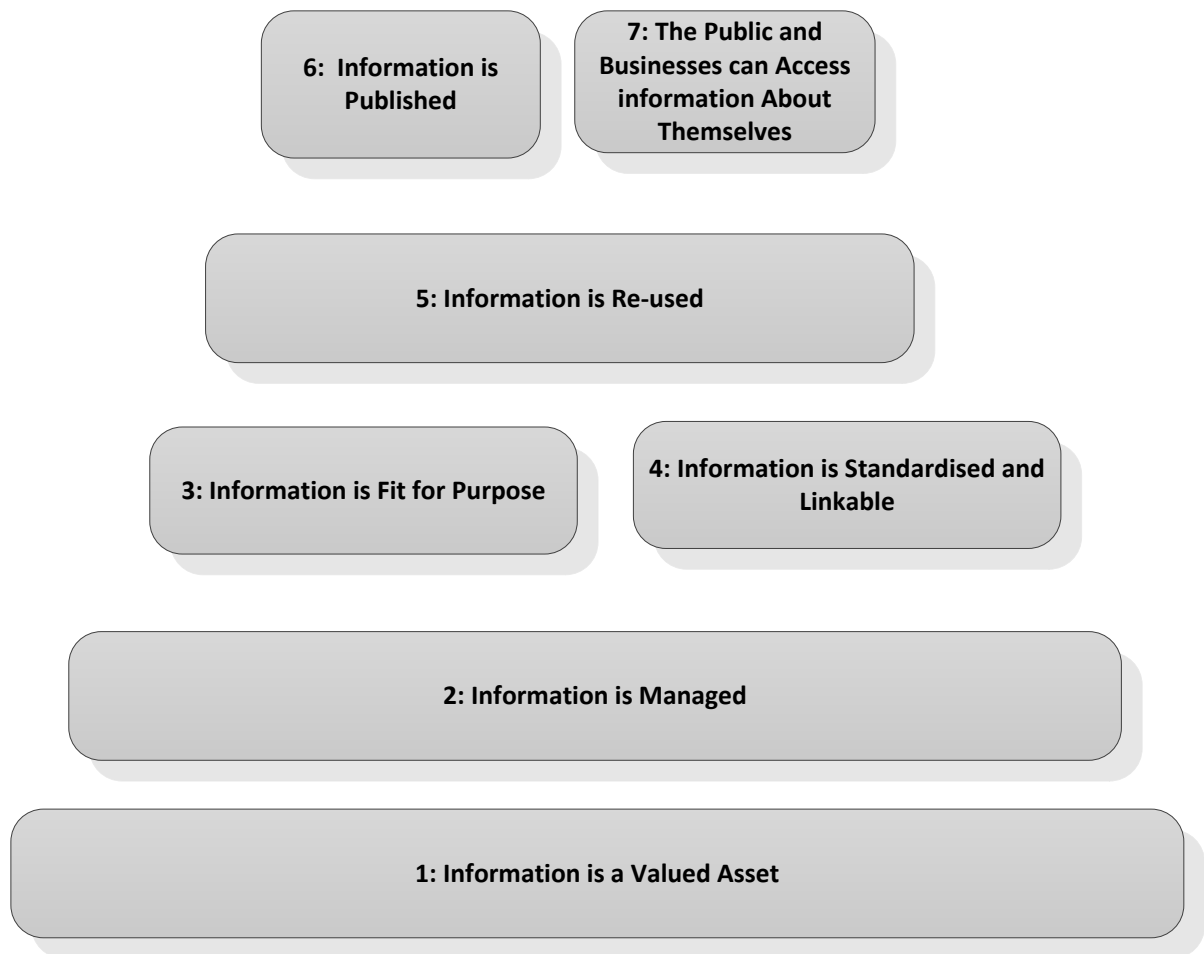
The FACS Information Management Principles are aligned with international best practice and the common approach outlined in the NSW Government Information Management Framework. FACS has adopted (with permission) the HM Government (UK) Information Principles 2011. Appendix B outlines the NSW Government information management principles and Appendix C provides a mapping between the NSW and the FACS/UK principles.

2 Purpose of these principles

This document presents a set of Information Principles which are intended to set direction for the management of information across FACS. They provide high level guidance to enable FACS to become increasingly aligned and consistent in the use and management of information, drawing from a common set of principles. The Information Principles are to be used to guide and govern effective information management as an organisational asset which contributes to FACS success and reputation.

The Information Management Policy, Records Management Policy and Information Security Policy form an Information Management Framework for FACS. Each of the policies specifies the respective roles and responsibilities for FACS staff. The principles will inform development of relevant standards, guidelines and procedures. The principles apply to all information that is created, collected, held, used, shared, transformed, published or processed by FACS. They apply to both structured and unstructured information, and to information at all stages of its lifecycle (Appendix D).

3 Principles overview



The seven principles build naturally into a hierarchy, as depicted above.

The first two principles provide a foundation as the basis on which all other uses depend. It is important that information is valued as an asset and managed, protected and used throughout its lifecycle. It needs to be governed with regard to regulation and based on a consistent approach to risk assessment.

The next two principles help to unlock the value inherent in information. Information needs to be fit for purpose, both in terms of its technical format and also in terms of conforming to well defined quality characteristics. It also becomes more valuable when it is made available in standardised forms and is able to be linked to other information and authoritative sources.

With these pre-requisites in place the principle of re-use can be achieved. Re-use both avoids wasteful duplication and provides the means to extract value in new and innovative ways. The top layer builds on all of the layers below, providing transparency by opening up access to information.

4 Principles

The following principles are to be used to guide and govern effective information management as an organisational asset which contributes to FACS success and reputation.

4.1 Principle 1 – *‘Information is a Valued Asset’*

Information is an asset which is fundamental to the efficient and effective delivery of public services. This principle emphasises the importance of FACS understanding the information that it uses and valuing that information in business terms. It draws the parallel with other organisational assets (e.g. buildings, machinery, people, money) - highlighting the need for information to be understood, recorded, valued, protected and used like any other organisational asset.

Information has a purpose, and in order to fully understand its value it is necessary to understand the purposes for which information is created and managed. This includes consideration of both the original purpose for which information is collected and also, as far as can be anticipated, any subsequent downstream uses.

Refer to:

- NSW Data & Information Custodianship Policy, Version 1.1, June 2015; and
- NSW Government Information Management Responsibilities and Accountability GUIDANCE, June 2013.

4.2 Principle 2 – *‘Information is Managed’*

Information Assets are to be managed, stored, protected and used in a manner commensurate with their value. This requires consideration of the lifecycle through which all information moves – for example from identification of need, collection, recording, use (and re-use), sharing and ultimately to archiving or destruction once it has ceased to have a business use. A range of information management best practices need to be applied throughout the lifecycle - for example to ensure appropriate availability and integrity, to avoid exposure and loss, and to ensure continuity across technology upgrades. It is particularly important that personal data is adequately protected.

Information needs to be governed as it moves through its lifecycle ensuring, for example, clarity as to who is responsible for it (i.e. an identifiable owner), and compliance with all relevant legislation and regulation. The consistent assessment and ownership of information risk is another important consideration. This principle therefore includes the processes, roles, responsibilities, training, and organisational structure and culture needed to ensure the effective and efficient use of information in enabling an organisation to achieve it.

Refer to:

- NSW Data & Information Custodianship Policy, Version 1.1, June

- Government Information Management Responsibilities and Accountability GUIDANCE, June 2013
- State Records Authority of NSW: Standard on Records Management, March 2015; and
- NSW Government Digital Information Security Policy, Version: 2.0, April 2015.

4.3 Principle 3 – *‘Information is Fit for Purpose’*

It is important to ensure that information is of sufficient quality to meet the purpose for which it is intended. The dimensions of quality include institutional environment, accuracy, coherence, interpretability, accessibility, timeliness and relevance (Appendix E). This includes both its primary purpose and also any additional secondary purposes. This principle does not require information to be perfect, only that it is of sufficient quality for the intended use. In an environment where information is widely re-used and published, it may not always be possible for the originator to foresee all potential downstream uses. Therefore information quality needs to be communicated consistently to those that may wish to re-use it, so that they can objectively judge for themselves if it is suitable.

A further aspect of this principle is considering alignment between information and its supporting technical platform and format.

Refer to:

- NSW Government Standard for Data Quality Reporting, Version 1.2, July 2015.

4.4 Principle 4 – *‘Information is Standardised and Linkable’*

The opportunities for using information greatly increase when it is made available in standardised and linkable forms. Standardisation is relevant both to structured information (e.g. in terms of dataset definitions), and also to unstructured information (e.g. in terms of the metadata tags applied to documents). Some value is unlocked by standardising information within an organisation, however there is even more value in making information available using widely accepted Open Standards.

Standardisation needs to be considered on a number of levels including:

- standardisation of format (e.g. date is represented in format yyyy-mm-dd)
- standardisation of content (e.g. given name, family name, address etc..)
- standardisation of concepts (e.g. client, carer service provider, household, placement, service type)
- standardisation of classification schemes (e.g. Australian Bureau of Statistics, Australian Institute Health and Welfare, NSW Government); and

- master data management ensuring that a single authoritative source for business information exists (e.g. an authoritative list of organisation codes) - nominated, maintained and promoted as such.

Further value can be unlocked when information is made available in a form that can be linked. The linking of documents provides a familiar example of this – with references and citations allowing the reader to draw in a wealth of associated documents providing further information.

A similar concept can also be applied to structured data - based on an understanding of the relationships between items, and the use of consistent identifiers to reference authoritative sources. For example, tagging funding information with an authoritative code for the service provider would allow it to be linked with both details of the organisation itself, and with other information held elsewhere about that same service provider (e.g. service provision and outcomes).

Refer to:

- NSW Government Information Management: A common approach, May 2015.

4.5 Principle 5 – *‘Information is Re-used’*

The value of information can be multiplied by re-use. This requires a change of mindset – to think outside of traditional silos and proactively look for opportunities to re-use.

Aspects of re-use include:

- internal re-use - making sure that full value is gained from using information for its primary purpose, and furthermore identifying secondary uses to which it can be put. For example, operational data can sometimes be re-used to support performance improvement or research
- external re-use – sharing information with others across organisational boundaries, whether within the public sector, or our business partners. FACS is committed to fully supporting inter-government data and information sharing that will contribute to improved outcomes at both a national and local level; and
- master data management- a further aspect of re-use involves using master data (a single authoritative source) as a reference for core business information across multiple systems.

Re-use involves considering what information an organisation can make available to others, but it also involves looking at what others have on offer, and how an organisation might itself re-use this external information. Whilst this principle strongly encourages re-use, it is important to appreciate that re-use does require a careful risk-based judgement to be made with regard to using vs. protecting information, as well as consideration to the costs and benefits involved, and any rights or other commercial considerations.

Information which initially appears unsuitable may often be reformatted for re-use. For example, operational information that identifies individuals can be de-identified (made anonymous) or aggregated and then be of wider value. Also,

in cases where the partner organisation is known beforehand, then concerns can sometimes be mitigated by means of negotiation, joint-working, and data sharing agreements.

Re-use of information presents opportunities for cost savings and efficiencies. There is a cost and burden to collecting information and, once collected, opportunities should be sought to extract additional value by appropriate and innovative secondary uses. Where quality information is available externally it can be accessed via a partnership rather than taken again by FACS. In addition there may be opportunities for the re-use of information to lead to consequent cost savings from further consolidation within the systems portfolio.

Refer to:

- NSW Government Open Data Policy, Version 1.0, September 2013
- NSW Government Information Management: A common approach, May 2015
- State Records Authority of NSW: Information Asset Register; and
- NSW Government Standard for Data Quality Reporting, Version 1.2, July 2015.

4.6 Principle 6 – ‘Information is Published’

Information includes the objective, factual, non-personal information on which services run and are assessed, and on which policy decisions are based, or which is collected or generated in the course of service delivery. Information should be published, unless there are overriding reasons not to publish e.g. privacy, confidentiality, relevance and completeness. The NSW Government’s Open Data Policy provides clear direction for government agencies on implementing the Government’s commitment to open data. It provides mechanisms to support agencies to prioritise the release of data and a framework for clearly describing data quality.

Publishing information requires consideration of the practical channels by which this will actually be achieved. This includes the establishment of internal publication processes, the use of publication hubs, as well as potentially relationships with third party “information intermediaries”.

The desire to publish information does need to be balanced against constraints which may prevent this. Exclusions would include, for example, personal information, information which can compromise privacy, commercially and legally privileged information, and information that is required to maintain security. In some cases, information which appears initially unsuitable may be reformatted for publication.

Publishing information provides benefits to government, communities, and the public such as:

- making government more accountable and approachable - enabling the public to hold the government to account
- creating better value for money by providing an insight into how money is spent, encouraging improved controls on spending and reduction of costs

- stimulating growth by enabling businesses to develop innovative information-based products and applications using public data; and
- providing choice and improving public sector outcomes, by giving the public the information they need to make informed decisions about the services they use, and giving providers the incentives they need to improve the quality of their services and to develop new innovative services.

Refer to:

- NSW Government Open Data Policy, Version 1.0, September 2013
- NSW Government Standard for Data Quality Reporting, Version 1.2, July 2015
- Government Information (Public Access) Act, 2009; and
- Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act, 1998.

4.7 Principle 7 – ‘*The Public and Businesses Can Access Information about Themselves*’

The public is able to access information relating to them. This may be either on request through the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009* (GIPA Act) process or by making it available by default. In effect, such information could be considered as belonging to the public, although entrusted to the care of a public body.

Note, that this principle goes beyond the minimum requirements imposed by legislation. It suggests an aspirational approach where the public could access information about themselves, without it necessarily needing to be specifically requested or mandated in legislation. This might be achieved, for example, by making it securely available online. One example would be information for children living in out of home care arrangements so that each child could access, over time, their own personal information such as photos, school information, and carer details to ensure that their history is recorded, acknowledged and available to them. Consideration needs to be given to both viewing and, where appropriate, to performing transactions such as updates (for example to correct inaccuracies). The desire to make information available does need to be balanced against constraints which may prevent this. Exclusions would include, for example, legally privileged information, and information that is required to maintain security.

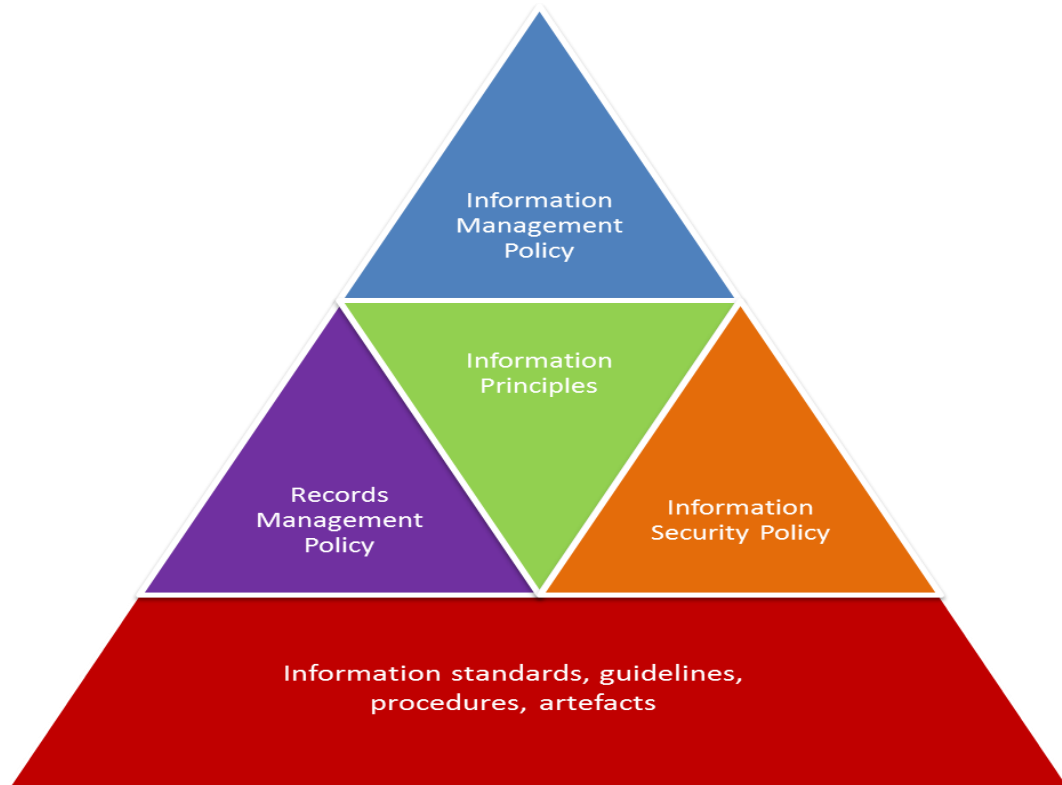
Refer to:

- NSW Government Open Data Policy, Version 1.0, September 2013
- NSW Government Standard for Data Quality Reporting, Version 1.2, July 2015
- Government Information (Public Access) Act, 2009; and
- Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act, 1998

Appendix A: FACS Information Management Policy Framework

The FACS Information Management Policy Framework is a system of policies and supporting standards, guidelines and procedures that embody a set of principles, guiding the way in which we treat and manage our information assets.

Diagram 1: Information Management Policy Framework



Central to this Information Management Framework is the set of principles for information management (see Information Principles, Version 1.0, September 2015, FACS).

FACS' policies with respect to information are derived from these principles and grouped into three inter-related yet distinct categories:

- Information Management Policy (this document) - the overarching policy
- Records Management Policy – separately defined due to specific legislative and compliance requirements; and
- Information Security Policy – separately defined due to specific legislative and compliance requirements.

Appendix B: NSW Government Information Management Principles

Refer to:

- NSW Government Information Management: A common approach, May 2015.

NSW Government data and information are managed in a way that enables better service delivery and better value investment, these principles are:

Governed

- as assets of strategic, operational and administrative value to NSW Government agencies; and
- 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 regard for the privacy of NSW citizens and the confidentiality of NSW organisations; and
- once, according to standards that support relevance, accuracy and consistency so they are reliable, fit for purpose and can be appropriately 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; and
- 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; and
- 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
- and re-used, so NSW Government agencies derive maximum benefit from their investment in these assets.

Shared

- with regard 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; and
- published and made available for discovery 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
- 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.

Appendix C: Mapping of FACS Information Management Principles to NSW Government

The FACS Information Management Principles align with the Information Management Principles of the NSW Government (see Information Management Principles and Outcomes (NSW Government, 2015) and Appendix B).

The following table lists the FACS Information Management Principles and their NSW Government counterpart(s).

FACS Principle (see Chapter 4)	NSW Government Principle (see Appendix B)
Principle 1 – <i>‘Information is a Valued Asset’</i>	Information is Governed Information is Secured
Principle 2 – <i>‘Information is Managed’</i>	Information is Governed Information is Secured
Principle 3 – <i>‘Information is Fit for Purpose’</i>	Information is Organised Information is Collected
Principle 4 – <i>‘Information is Standardised and Linkable’</i>	Information is Organised Information is Shared
Principle 5 – <i>‘Information is Re-used’</i>	Information is Collected Information is Used Information is Maintained Information is Secured
Principle 6 – <i>‘Information is Published’</i>	Information is Used Information is Shared
Principle 6 – <i>‘The Public and Businesses can access Information about Themselves’</i>	Information is Used Information is Shared Information is Secured

Appendix D: Additional References

The following table lists information sources that have informed development of this document.

Author	Publication	Source
NSW Government	NSW ICT Strategy 2012	http://finance.nsw.gov.au/ict/
NSW Government	Information Management: A common approach	http://finance.nsw.gov.au/ict/sites/default/files/IM%20common%20approach%20v1.pdf
NSW Government	NSW Data & Information Custodianship Policy 2013	http://www.finance.nsw.gov.au/content/dfs-c2013-3-data-and-information-custodianship-policy
NSW Government	Open Data Policy	http://finance.nsw.gov.au/ict/priorities/open-data
NSW Government	Digital + NSW ICT Strategy – Update 2014-15	http://www.finance.nsw.gov.au/ict/sites/default/files/resources/Digital%2B%20NSW%20Government%20ICT%20Strategy%20Update%202014-15.pdf
HM Government (UK)	Information Principles December 2011, Version 1.0	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/information-principles-for-the-uk-public-sector .
HM Government (UK)	Open Government Licence, Version 3.0	https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3/
Office of the Australian Information Commissioner	Principles on open public sector information May 2011	http://www.oaic.gov.au/information-policy/information-policy-resources/information-policy-agency-resources/principles-on-open-public-sector-information
University of Melbourne	Information Principles	http://www.unimelb.edu.au/infostrategy/policies/info_principles.html
Australian Taxation Office	Information Management Principles	http://www.ato.gov.au/About-ATO/About-us/How-we-do-things/Information-management/Information-management-principles/
Step Two Designs	10 principles of effective information management November 2005	http://www.steptwo.com.au/papers/kmc_effectiveim/index.html
New Zealand Government	New Zealand Data and Information Management Principles	http://ict.govt.nz/programmes/open-and-transparent-government/new-zealand-data-and-information-management-principles
ACPO National Policing Improvement Agency	Guidance on the Management of Police Information 2 nd edition, 2010	http://www.acpo.police.uk/documents/information/2010/201004INFMOPi01.pdf
ABS	Data Quality Framework	https://www.nss.gov.au/dataquality/aboutqualityframework.jsp