

Information Management Maturity Report 2023-24 Local Government

STATE RECORDS
of South Australia



Government of South Australia
State Records

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Information Management Maturity Report – Local Government

This report focusses on local governments (including subsidiaries and regional subsidiaries).

Survey

In 2023, under section 15 of the *State Records Act 1997* (SR Act), State Records conducted a survey of agencies¹ current information management practices compliance against the Information Management Standard (Standard).

Results are split into different sectors –

- » state government agencies (including boards and committees, minister’s offices and statutory authorities)
- » local government (including subsidiaries and regional subsidiaries)
- » universities

A 2023-24 South Australian (SA) baseline has also been provided and includes all sectors results, enabling a comparison against every agency that responded to the survey across the state.

Information Management Standard (the Standard)

The Standard establishes the principles and behaviours expected of agencies in managing government information to achieve their business objectives and to meet requirements under their legislative and policy obligations.

To comply with the Standard, agencies must satisfy the level 2 (operational) criteria for each behaviour (unless a valid reason can be demonstrated why maintaining a lower level is acceptable e.g. due to agency operational or regulatory requirements or level of risk identified). This is referred to as the benchmark.

Definitions

Tool – the State Records Self-Assessment Tool (Tool) that enables agencies to assess information governance maturity and compliance against the Standard. The Tool offers a scalable, tiered approach to help identify areas of strength and weakness at each level of maturity and capability. It also generates automated reports that identify the areas agencies need to address as a priority. It has been designed to be used by agencies at any time to aid the improvement of their information management practices, not just when surveyed by State Records.

¹ As defined under clause 3(1) of the *State Records Act 1997*

2023-24 Baseline – the whole of state combined survey result. Includes state government, local government, subsidiaries and regional subsidiaries, universities, boards and committees, minister’s offices and statutory authorities.

Benchmark – for the purposes of this report, the benchmark is the operational level 2 capability for behaviours (from the Tool). To comply with the Standard and reach the benchmark, agencies must score each behaviour at a level 2 capability (unless a valid reason can be demonstrated why maintaining a lower level is acceptable).

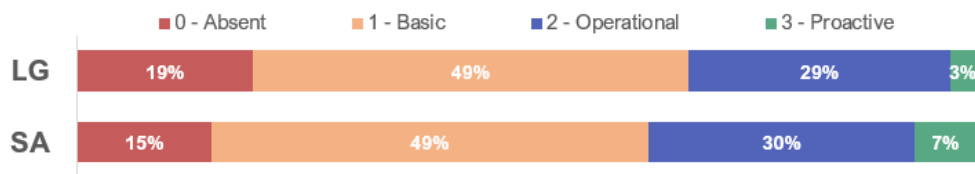
Principle – outlined in the Information Management Strategy, what agencies must follow to ensure their data and information assets can be relied upon and trusted. Each principle is underpinned by a set of behaviours that agencies must demonstrate to ensure their information management practices align with government expectations.

Behaviour – expected behaviours, under the principles in the Standard, required to effectively manage information assets, to achieve business objectives and to meet legislative and policy obligations.

Report structure

This report is divided up by principle, then by behaviour. The percentage of maturity ratings for each behaviour reported by local government organisations (LG) is displayed in a graph and measured against the 2023-24 SA baseline.

For example, the graph below shows that 29% of local government organisations rated at level 2 for behaviour 1.1, compared to 30% of the whole state combined.



The principle graph combines each behaviour into one score and is followed by the behaviour graphs. Additional commentary highlighting points of interest rounds off each principle section.

Response rate

There was a 100% response rate to the survey for Councils (all 68 Councils responded).

35% of subsidiaries and regional subsidiaries responded (7 of 20 responded).

Collectively the response rate was 85%.

General commentary

In recognising that one of the reasons for the survey was to establish a baseline to compare future surveys against, it was pleasing to see local government organisations provided an honest account of current information management maturity and disclosed there is room for improvement.

It is acknowledged that some local government organisations are very small with limited budgets and capacity to make significant improvements.

Overall, local government organisations had positive comments about the use of the Tool. Several Councils advised the Tool is a very useful resource that has highlighted information management areas for improvement. Local government organisations have

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indicated they are taking their results and using them to report up to senior management and prioritise future information management projects.

It is noted, behaviour 5.4 is not applicable to local government information management arrangements and has been removed from this report. Local government information assets are almost exclusively covered by a general disposal schedule and therefore do not need to seek additional schedule coverage.

The Tool will be amended to include context for local government to be able to adequately respond to behaviour 5.4 in the future.

It is also noted local government organisations do not have overarching privacy legislation nor are they bound to the Information Privacy Principles Instruction. This means they are burdened with developing and managing privacy policy internally, without the benefit of legislation or official government frameworks.

Local governments are operating:

- » above the 2023-24 baseline for every principle
- » at the benchmark for 25 out of the 33 behaviours
- » below the benchmark for the Information Management Plan and Program

See Attachment 1 for a table of consolidated results for local government.

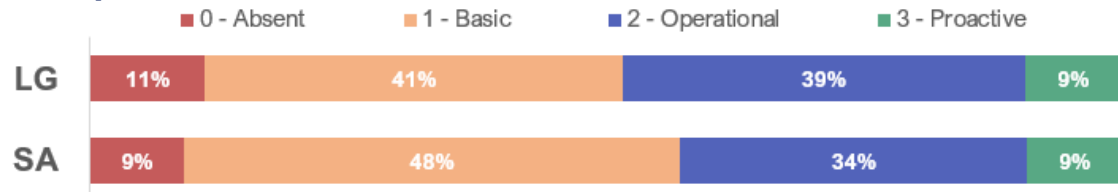
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Principle 1

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.

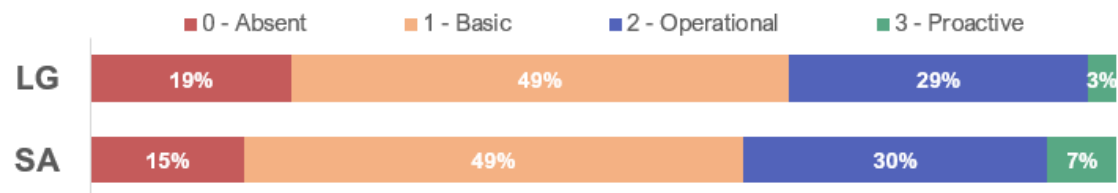
Principle Result



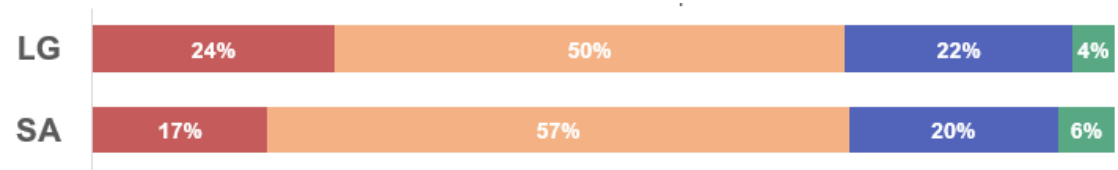
Local government is operating slightly above the 2023-24 baseline for principle 1.

Behaviours

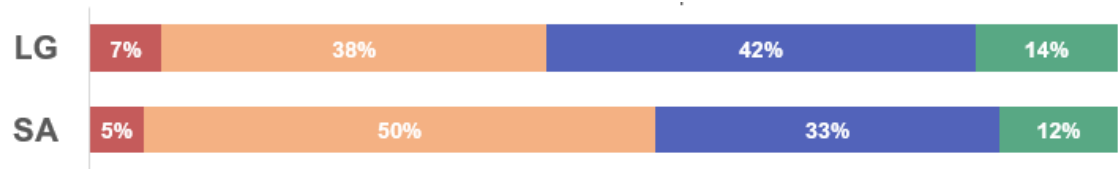
1.1 Identify and document what their information assets are, where they are stored and who is responsible for their management



1.2 Understand and document how their information assets support their business objectives and operations or their compliance obligations

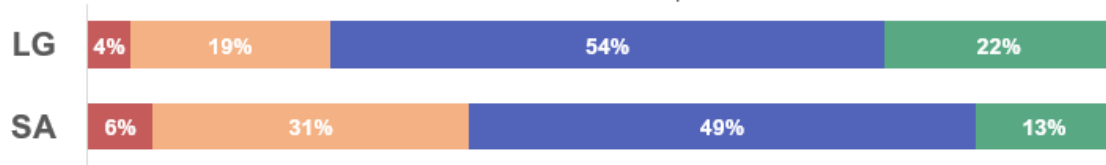


1.3 Ensure information assets are linked to business functions and activities



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1.4 Induct and train staff in the value of information and in their information management responsibilities



1.5 Foster an organisational culture that values and manages information as an asset and supports business objectives and activities



Principle 1 - Commentary

To achieve the benchmark for principle 1, local government organisations need to:

- » complete an audit on hardcopy and digital information assets
- » create an information asset register that captures all assets
- » conduct a value and risk assessment
- » apply a business classification scheme (or similar) to all information assets in the information asset register
- » provide all new staff with a basic induction to information management and all information management staff with comprehensive information management training
- » have a clear strategic direction for the management of information assets.

Under principle 1, local government is operating:

- » just below the 2023-24 baseline for behaviour 1.1
- » equal to the 2023-24 baseline for behaviour 1.2
- » above the 2023-24 baseline for behaviours 1.3, 1.4 and 1.5

For behaviours 1.1 and 1.2, most local government organisations are operating below the benchmark. However, most are operating at or above the benchmark for the behaviours 1.3 and 1.4 and half at the benchmark for 1.5.

49% of Local government organisations scored basic for behaviour 1.1 which indicates informal information asset audits have been conducted and some information assets are identified and documented but maybe not in a consolidated form.

50% of Local government organisations scored basic for behaviour 1.2 which indicates a value and risk assessment may have been conducted for specific requirements and there is some understanding of how information supports business objectives.

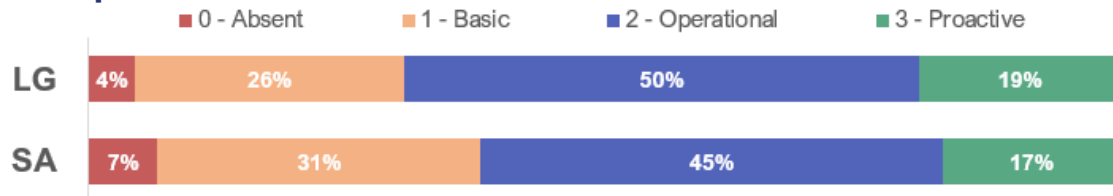
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Principle 2

Information assets are created and managed appropriate to risk

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

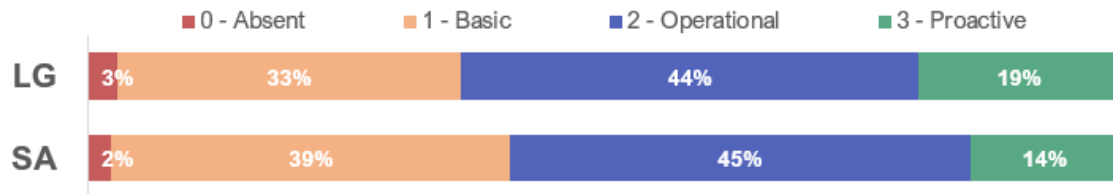
Principle Result



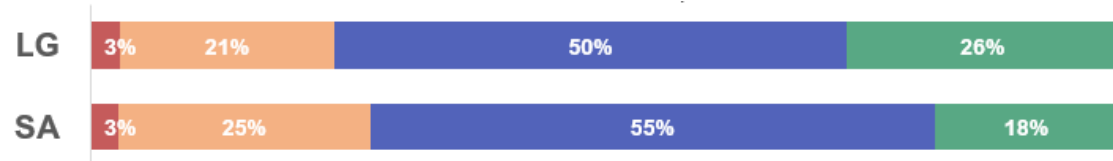
For principle 2, local government is operating above the 2023-24 baseline.

Behaviours

2.1 Analyse and document what information assets must be created and managed across the agency applicable to the regulatory environment in which they operate



2.2 Develop and issue policies and procedures outlining how information assets will be managed

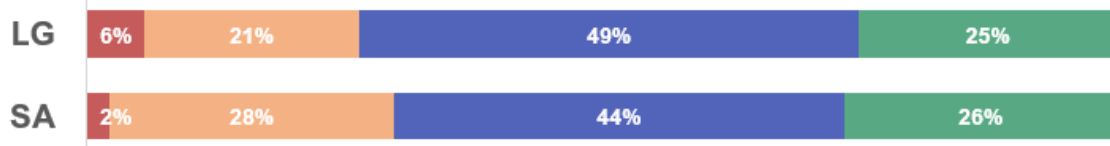


2.3 Assess the risks of not creating or managing information assets where there is a legal, evidential, or business need

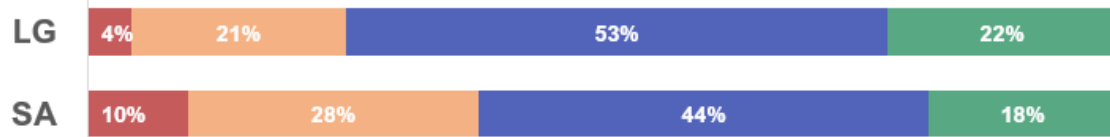


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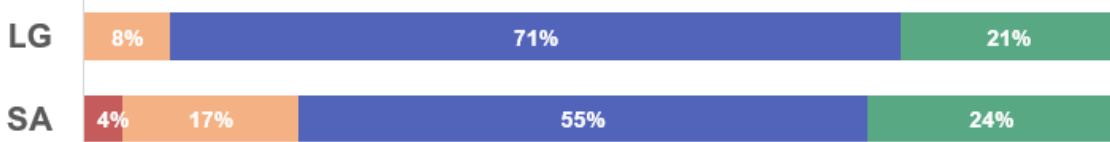
2.4 Manage information assets digitally unless there are specific reasons for keeping hardcopy information assets



2.5 Design and implement systems according to relevant standards so that they support the effective management and disposal of information assets



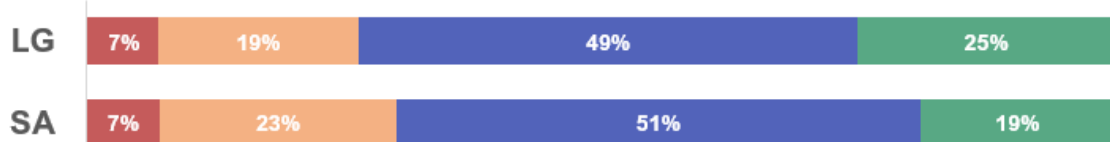
2.6 Manage and store information assets appropriately, to ensure they remain accessible for as long as required



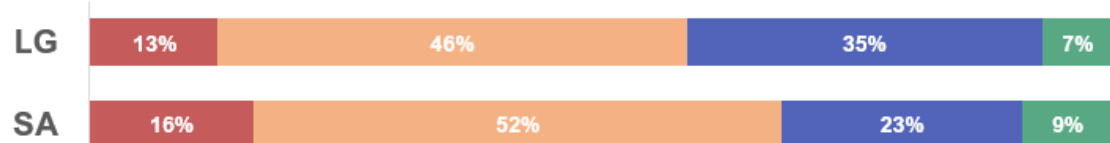
2.7 Only destroy information assets when no longer required, and in accordance with current, approved disposal determinations issued by State Records



2.8 Review and audit how well their information management policies and practices support their business



2.9 Monitor, report and improve staff adherence to internal information management policies



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Principle 2 - Commentary

To achieve the benchmark for principle 2, local government organisations need to:

- » analyse and document requirements to create and manage information assets
- » have policies and procedures that outline the management of information assets
- » identify the risks from not creating or managing information assets
- » move away from hybrid digital and hardcopy information assets and mostly digitally manage information assets
- » design/configure critical systems (including an EDRMS) according to information management standards and business requirements
- » manage and store information appropriately
- » plan and regularly implement destruction of information when no longer needed for legal, business or other purpose
- » report consistently on staff adherence to information management policies.

For principle 2, local government organisations are operating above or equal to the 2023-24 baseline for all behaviours.

Many local government organisations are operating at or above the benchmark for all the behaviours except for behaviour 2.9 - monitor, report and improve staff adherence to internal information management policies. For this behaviour, 46% of local government scored at the basic level. This indicates staff adherence to internal information management policies is reported on inconsistently across the state.

92% of local government organisations operate at or above the benchmark for behaviour 2.6 indicating most (if not all) information is managed and stored appropriately and can be readily identified and accessed.

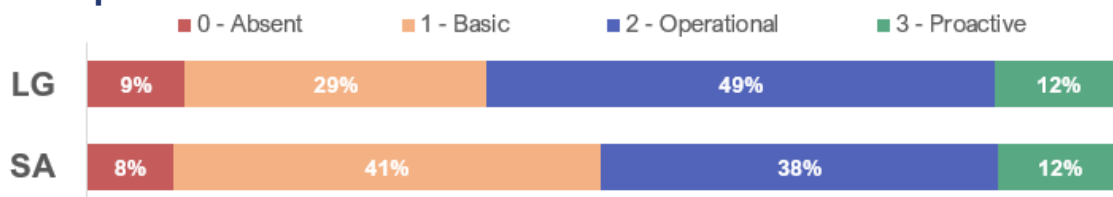
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Principle 3

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 broader community.

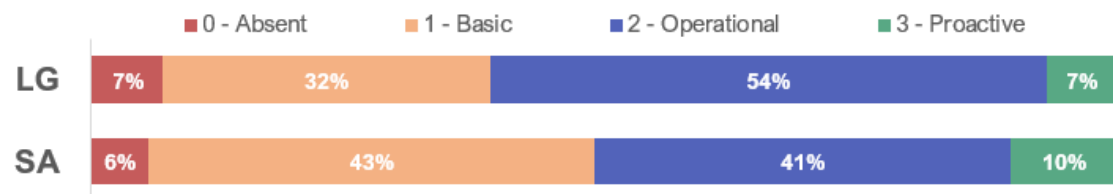
Principle Result



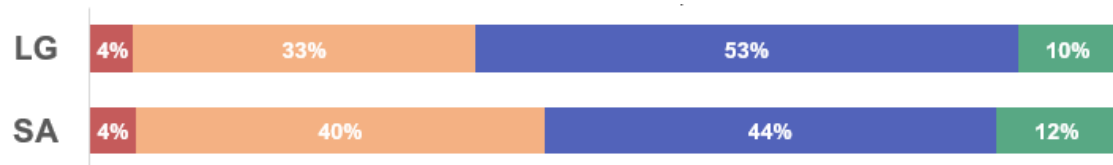
For principle 3, local government is operating above the 2023-24 baseline.

Behaviours

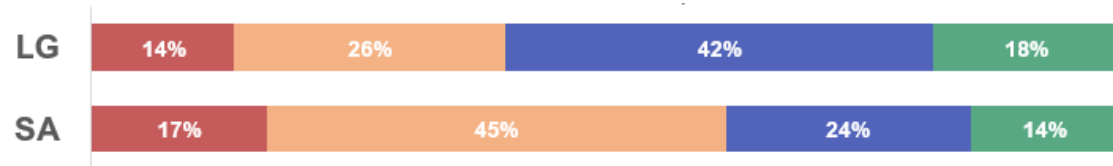
3.1 Ensure ownership of information assets are assigned



3.2 Ensure that owners are aware of their responsibilities and accountabilities for managing the information assets

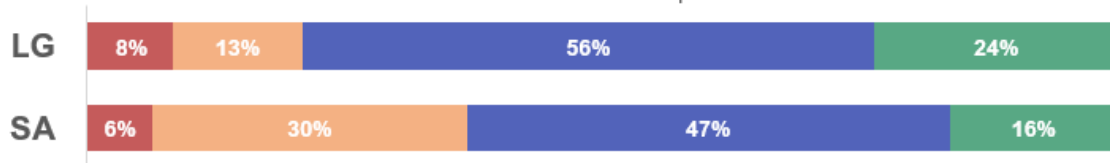


3.3 Ensure responsibilities for information assets management are delegated appropriately, in writing



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3.4 Ensure that roles and responsibilities relating to the ownership and management of information assets are clearly defined in policy or other internal documents.



3.5 Ensure that ownership and accountability for information assets are managed consistently through a governance structure



Principle 3 - Commentary

To achieve the benchmark for principle 3, local government organisations need to:

- » assign owners to all information assets who are responsible for their management
- » formally delegate information management responsibilities in writing
- » formally document information roles and responsibilities in policies, position descriptions and governance documents
- » consistently implement accountability structures.

For the behaviours under principle 3, local government organisations are operating above the 2023-24 baseline.

Most local government organisations are operating at or above the behaviour benchmark for this principle, except for behaviour 3.5.

This indicates that all information assets are assigned and everyone is aware of their responsibilities and accountabilities. All responsibilities are formally delegated in writing and are documented in policies, procedures, position descriptions and governance documents.

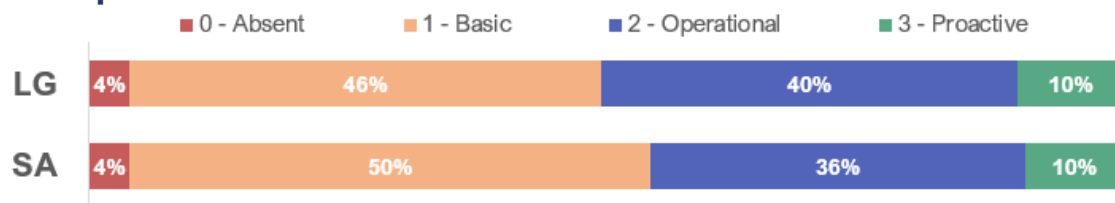
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Principle 4

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.

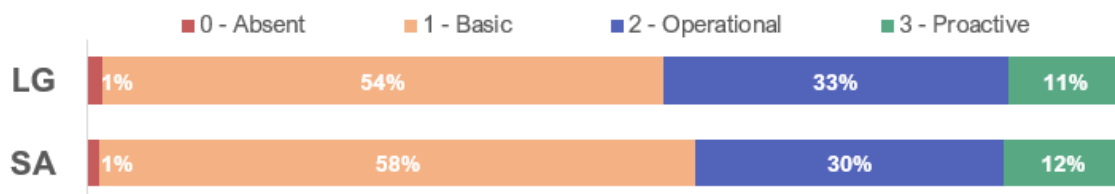
Principle Result



For principle 4, local government is operating above the 2023-24 baseline.

Behaviours

4.1 Create and keep full and accurate information assets appropriate to their business processes, regulatory environment and risk and accountability requirements



4.2 Ensure information assets are saved into systems in a timely manner that meet relevant Standards and whole of government security Frameworks to ensure they are protected from compromise



4.3 Record relevant details (metadata) in systems so that the business context of information can be readily understood

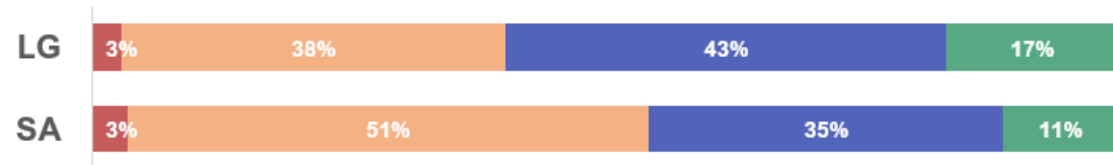


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4.4 Use established and existing definitions for information assets where possible, so that there is consistency across the agency



4.5 Implement practices and systems that ensure the quality and authenticity of information assets.



Principle 4 - Commentary

To achieve the benchmark for principle 4, local government organisations need to:

- » create and keep, full and accurate information assets with identified requirements and the value and risk assessment undertaken
- » save information assets (in a timely manner) into protected business or information systems that meet Standards, frameworks and metadata requirements.
- » ensure all business or information systems manage the minimum metadata requirements of the Minimum Recordkeeping Metadata Requirements Standard
- » use established and existing information definitions
- » implement practices and systems to ensure quality and authenticity of information assets

Under principle 4, local government organisations are operating above the 2023-24 baseline for all behaviours.

However, many local government organisations (and the 2023-24 baseline) are below the benchmark for principles 4.1 and 4.4. This indicates that 54% of local government organisations are aware of the information assets required but only some are complete and accurate and 50% have established and existing definitions but they are not used consistently across the organisation.

Depending on the behaviour, the graphs above reflect 38% - 58% of local government operate at the basic level. This suggests that some information assets are created and kept, and some are complete and accurate but not all. Not all information assets are saved into business systems in a timely manner. Some systems manage metadata and some do not.

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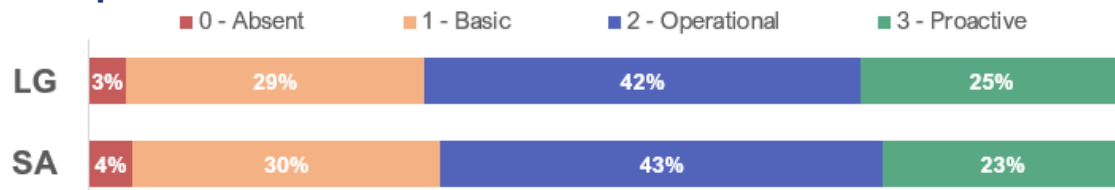
Principle 5

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.

Note, behaviour 5.4 is not applicable to local government information management arrangements and has been removed from this report. Local government information assets are almost exclusively covered by a general disposal schedule and therefore do not need to seek additional schedule coverage.

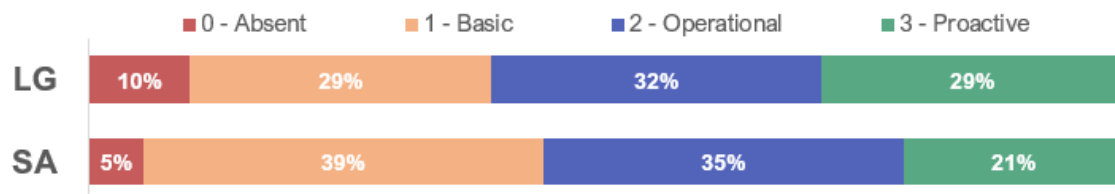
Principle Result



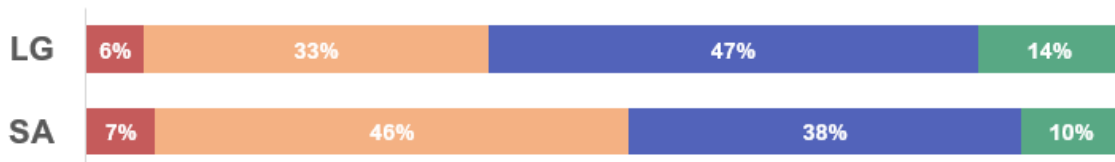
For principle 5, local government is operating above the 2023-24 baseline. Behaviour 5.4 has been removed from this graph.

Behaviours

5.1 Implement information security classifications and requirements that are applicable to the sensitivity of the information in accordance with whole of government policies and administrative directions



5.2 Review access restrictions on information and amend as sensitivity alters

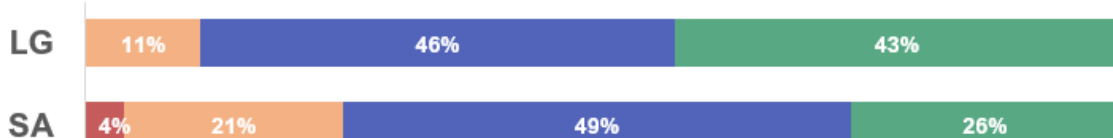


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5.3 Migrate digital information assets as systems, software and media are upgraded or become obsolete to ensure it remains accessible for as long as it is required



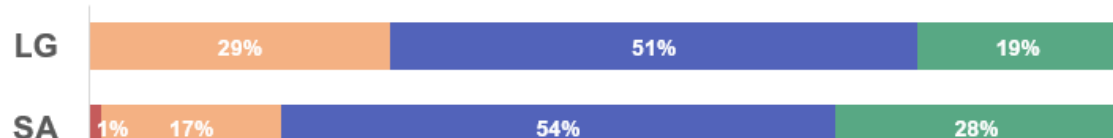
5.5 Ensure that no information asset is destroyed unless in accordance with current, approved disposal determinations



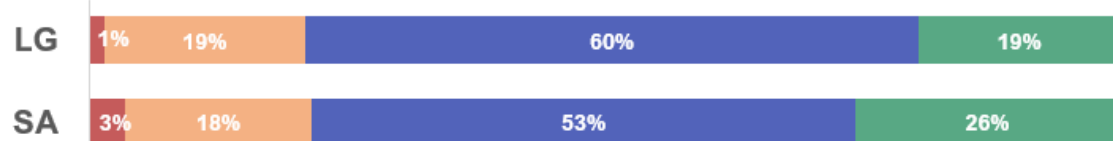
5.6 Collect, use, disclose, store, and dispose of personal information in accordance with the information privacy principles



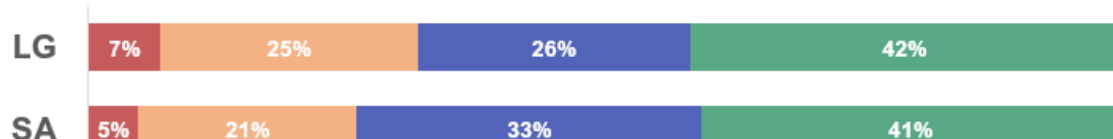
5.7 Share information across government as appropriate or where authorised



5.8 Proactively publish information in line with government policy



5.9 Not sell, abandon or donate information assets to external parties where such action would result in the agency not having access to that information and without authorisation in the form of a disposal determination.



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Principle 5 - Commentary

To achieve the benchmark for principle 5, local government organisations need to:

- » ensure information security classifications are appropriately applied to all information assets
- » regularly review and update access restrictions
- » plan migration of information when systems are upgraded or before they become obsolete
- » have a records disposal schedule (approved by State Records Council) that covers all information assets
- » destroy information assets through authorised and current approved disposal determinations
- » collect, use, disclose, store and dispose of personal information appropriately
- » undertake privacy impact assessments for projects and initiatives
- » share information in line with information sharing protocols
- » proactively publish information in line with policy or legislation, or as requested
- » sell or donate information through an authorised process

For the behaviours under principle 5, local government is operating at a variety of levels compared to the 2023-24 baseline.

Local government is operating:

- above the 2023-24 baseline for four of the behaviours (5.1, 5.2 and 5.5)
- below the 2023-24 baseline for three of the behaviours (5.3, 5.7 and 5.9)
- equal to the 2023-24 baseline for two of the behaviours (5.6 and 5.8)

Many local government organisations are operating at or above the benchmark for all behaviours under principle 5, except 5.6.

Scoring below the benchmark for 5.6 indicates that privacy principles, policy and legislation is sometimes considered when dealing with personal information (a consistent theme across the state). However, local government organisations do not have overarching privacy legislation nor are they bound by the Information Privacy Principles Instruction. This means they are burdened with developing and managing privacy policy internally, without the benefit of legislation or official government frameworks. 79% of local government operate at or above the benchmark for behaviour 5.8, indicating information is proactively published in line with policy or legislation and in some instances seeks stakeholder views on what information should be published.

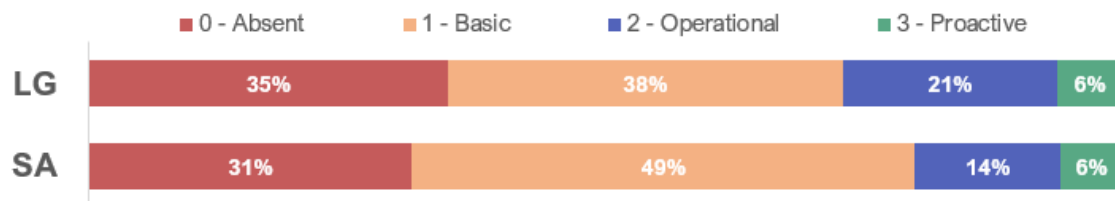
42% of local government operate at the proactive level for behaviour 5.9 which suggests local government ensure staff understand they are creating records which have value to the organisation, the community and the state. There are policies in place that ensure information is not disposed of through sale, given away to external parties or taken home by employees.

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Information Management Program and Plan

An Information Management Plan provides practical direction for implementing a Program and is a core element of an agency’s Information Management Program. It should be developed to support the agency’s broader strategic and corporate goals and objectives.

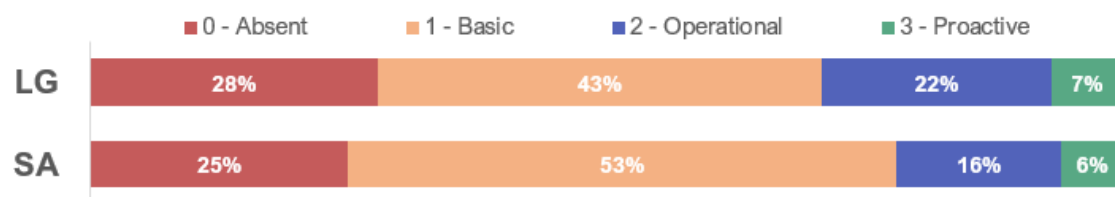
Result



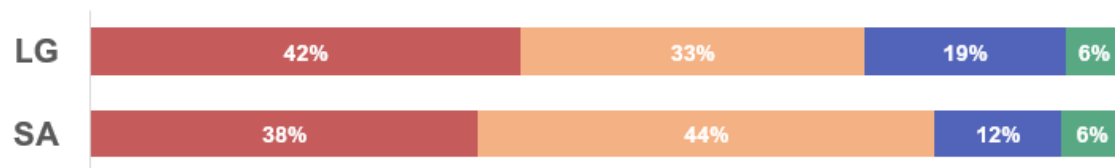
On balance, Local government is operating equal to the 2023-24 baseline for the information management plan and program.

Behaviours

iii.1 An Information Management Plan exists



iii.2 Progress against the Information Management Plan is assessed and reported on



Principle iii - Commentary

To achieve the benchmark for principle iii, local government agencies need to:

- » have an information management plan that encompasses all information assets and business systems
- » monitor and assess progress against the plan.

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For the information management plan behaviour, local government operate above the 2023-24 baseline. As this requirement is new to the Standard, all organisations surveyed are well below the benchmark.

For progress against the information management plan, local government operate below both the benchmark and the 2023-24 baseline. 42% of local government scored absent in this behaviour indicating no progress is assessed and reported on against the information management plan.

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Attachment 1: Local government – survey results

This attachment provides a summary of the most common maturity ratings (also known as the Mode) reported by local government organisations. It also identifies the variance against the benchmark.

Principles and Behaviours		Benchmark (Standard)	SA Mode 2024	LG Mode 2024	Variance (Benchmark)
Principle 1 - the value of information is known					
1.1	Identify and document what their information assets are, where they are stored and who is responsible for their management	2	1	1	↓ 1
1.2	Understand and document how their information assets support their business objectives and operations or their compliance obligations	2	1	1	↓ 1
1.3	Ensure information assets are linked to business functions and activities	2	1	2	-
1.4	Induct and train staff in the value of information and in their information management responsibilities	2	2	2	-
1.5	Foster an organisational culture that values and manages information as an asset and supports business objectives and activities	2	1	2	-
Principle 2 – information assets are created and managed appropriate to risk					
2.1	Analyse and document what information assets must be created and managed across the agency applicable to the regulatory environment in which they operate	2	2	2	-
2.2	Develop and issue policies and procedures outlining how information assets will be managed	2	2	2	-
2.3	Assess the risks of not creating or managing information assets where there is a legal, evidential, or business need	2	2	2	-
2.4	Manage information assets digitally unless there are specific reasons for keeping hardcopy information assets	2	2	2	-
2.5	Design and implement systems according to relevant standards so that they support the effective management and disposal of information assets	2	2	2	-
2.6	Manage and store information assets appropriately, to ensure they remain accessible for as long as required	2	2	2	-
2.7	Only destroy information assets when no longer required, and in accordance with current, approved disposal determinations issued by State Records	2	1	2	-

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Principles and Behaviours		Benchmark (Standard)	SA Mode 2024	LG Mode 2024	Variance (Benchmark)
2.8	Review and audit how well their information management policies and practices support their business	2	2	2	-
2.9	Monitor, report and improve staff adherence to internal information management policies	2	1	1	↓ 1
Principle 3 – ownership of information assets is assigned					
3.1	Ensure ownership of information assets are assigned	2	1	2	-
3.2	Ensure that owners are aware of their responsibilities and accountabilities for managing the information assets	2	2	2	-
3.3	Ensure responsibilities for information assets management are delegated appropriately, in writing	2	1	2	-
3.4	Ensure that roles and responsibilities relating to the ownership and management of information assets are clearly defined in policy or other internal documents.	2	2	2	-
3.5	Ensure that ownership and accountability for information assets are managed consistently through a governance structure	2	1	2	-
Principle 4 – information assets can be relied upon					
4.1	Create and keep full and accurate information assets appropriate to their business processes, regulatory environment and risk and accountability requirements	2	1	1	↓ 1
4.2	Ensure information assets are saved into systems in a timely manner that meet relevant Standards ¹ and whole of government security Frameworks to ensure they are protected from compromise	2	1	2	-
4.3	Record relevant details (metadata) in systems so that the business context of information can be readily understood	2	1	1	↓ 1
4.4	Use established and existing definitions for information assets where possible, so that there is consistency across the agency	2	1	1	↓ 1
4.5	Implement practices and systems that ensure the quality and authenticity of information assets.	2	1	2	-

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Principles and Behaviours		Benchmark (Standard)	SA Mode 2024	LG Mode 2024	Variance (Benchmark)
Principle 5 – information assets are available as required					
5.1	Implement information security classifications and requirements that are applicable to the sensitivity of the information in accordance with whole of government policies and administrative directions	2	1	2	-
5.2	Review access restrictions on information and amend as sensitivity alters	2	1	2	-
5.3	Migrate digital information assets as systems, software and media are upgraded or become obsolete to ensure it remains accessible for as long as it is required	2	2	1	↓ 1
5.5	Ensure that no information asset is destroyed unless in accordance with current, approved disposal determinations	2	2	2	-
5.6	Collect, use, disclose, store, and dispose of personal information in accordance with the information privacy principles	2	1	1	↓ 1
5.7	Share information across government as appropriate or where authorised	2	2	2	-
5.8	Proactively publish information in line with government policy	2	2	2	-
5.9	Not sell, abandon or donate information assets to external parties where such action would result in the agency not having access to that information and without authorisation in the form of a disposal determination.	2	3	3	↑ 1
Program and Plan					
iii.1	An information management plan exists	2	1	1	↓ 1
iii.2	Progress against the information management plan is assessed and reported on	2	1	0	↓ 2

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