



Future Proof

protecting our digital future

News for NSW Public Sector Chief Executives

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Managing information risk in the cloud

The term 'cloud computing' can be used to describe the use of a variety of different forms of technology over the Web, such as networks, servers, applications or services. In the NSW Government, cloud computing has been adopted to support many government activities from managing projects to carrying out recruitment and collaborating with multiple agencies.

The use of cloud computing arrangements can have a number of benefits:

- costs savings as a result of not purchasing and maintaining technology in house
- reduced pressure on IT departments, and

- access to services outside normal office environments.

If your organisation adopts cloud computing, however, it is important to recognise that there are also risks to be managed, for example:

- personal information that your organisation holds being stored in a jurisdiction with privacy laws that are less stringent than NSW's
- the system you are using in the cloud is not saving important business information as records, or
- the service provider having inadequate security or disaster recovery measures in place, leaving your information vulnerable to loss or compromise.

In some cases it may be that you determine that certain information is simply too sensitive to tolerate these types of risks, however small. For other areas of your business, however, there are some steps you can take to manage these risks:

1. When selecting new technology, have your risk manager or project manager determine whether there is any reason to exclude the cloud computing option (for example, because the information is too

sensitive to be held outside of official custody)

2. If a cloud computing service provider is selected, aim to include provisions regarding disaster recovery, security and location of your information in an agreement with the provider

3. If it is not possible to manage these things via an agreement, consider the impact to your business of loss or compromise of the information and determine whether the cloud is the best place to keep it

4. Check with your Privacy / Right to Information Officer about any privacy / access requirements relating to information that would be kept in 'the cloud'

State Records and the Government Chief Information Office are working together on help for agencies with managing the use of cloud computing arrangements

For more information:

- Australasian Digital Recordkeeping Initiative (ADRI), *Advice on managing the recordkeeping risks associated with cloud computing*, 2010
- State Records, *Recordkeeping in brief: Storage of State records with service providers outside of NSW* (RIB 54), 2009

Digital recordkeeping compliance monitoring

State Records wishes to thank public offices for participating in the digital recordkeeping compliance assessment exercise that was carried out recently.

This was an important exercise not only for meeting the compliance timetable laid down in Premiers Memorandum 2009-11 *NSW Standard on Digital Recordkeeping* but it will also assist us in the developing of relevant guidance and tools to assist public sector organisations with digital recordkeeping implementation.

The results are currently being compiled and a full report will be made available to all public office chief executives in early 2011.

Happy together? ICT professionals; attitudes and perceptions about recordkeeping

Why we did a survey

ICT and recordkeeping professionals in the NSW Government have much to gain from working together to address the digital recordkeeping needs of their organisations.

Knowing how critical a team made up of these groups is to the success of any digital recordkeeping initiative, we developed a survey for ICT professionals in order to understand the problems they face in relation to managing digital information, their attitudes to recordkeeping and records management and what they perceive as areas of

commonality and barriers to effective cooperation.

Who responded?

We had over 200 responses to the survey, from people in a variety of ICT related roles, including Application Development Managers, Business Analysts, Chief Information Officers, Enterprise Architects, Network Administrators, Programmers and Systems Analysts.

What did we learn about ICT professionals' perspectives?

We found out that many ICT professionals see records professionals as having the ability to offer skills such as:

- clearly defining how business information or should be classified, or
- giving staff advice on how to search for digital records across a variety of systems in order to improve the speed and efficiency of access, including providing access to historical data.

We asked ICT professionals: *'What are the main obstacles to records and ICT professionals working together effectively?'*, and most of the responses expressed that the main obstacles to an effective working relationship were that both professions work 'in silos'.

What about records professionals' views and attitudes?

We did not survey records professionals in this study. Our contact with records managers suggests, however, that they hold some similar views regarding the importance of working together with ICT to achieve business benefits for their organisations, and some of

the same concerns about being unable to properly communicate their requirements in the early stages of new systems procurement and/or design. Records professionals can offer significant value to systems design by being involved from the start, by advising on issues like records retention, access and accessibility over time.

What's next?

We have compiled a detailed report on the findings of the survey, which includes recommendations for action on which we are seeking feedback. We plan to deliver new products and advice over the next 12 months to address some of the issues raised by this survey.

For more information

State Records, *ICT attitudes to records and recordkeeping: survey report* (2010)

Records management self assessment tool

We have developed a self-assessment tool so that your organisation can assess its conformity with the requirements of the *State Records Act 1998* and standards issued under the Act. It also allows you to assess the capacity of the organisation to move to best practice records management.

The tool has seven modules, including one on digital recordkeeping, and can be used by your records manager, risk manager or auditor to check the state of your records management program and identify gaps needing improvement. It is available under 'Monitoring tools' on the State Records website.

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