![National Archives of Australia logo]

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF AUSTRALIA

2017 Digital Continuity Statement Whole-Of-Government Snapshot

Background

In 2017, the National Archives of Australia conducted its annual whole-of-government survey on progress towards digital information management continuity in the Australian Government. The survey ran from 1 July to 31 September. The 2017 reporting, under the Archives' Digital Continuity 2020 Policy, comprised a short online 'Digital Continuity 2020 Statement'.

The survey aimed to assess progress– across the Australian Government – against the 10 targets of the Digital Continuity 2020 Policy. Responses to the Statement will contribute to future reporting to the Minister and the Prime Minister on the state of digital information management across government.

The Digital Continuity 2020 Policy established targets that agencies need to achieve by 2020 in the course of their normal business review, ICT investment and maintenance cycles. The Archives provides pathways to guide and assist agencies as they progress towards these targets, describing what success looks like:
- information is managed as an asset
- work processes are entirely digital
- information, systems and processes are interoperable.

Summary of the findings

The evidence indicates a continuing improvement in capability of and commitment to digital information management, with the majority of agencies report that most targets are in progress or have been completed. While there are still a few agencies who report they have not started work on some of the recommended pathways and targets, these are mainly very small agencies who report a lack of resources for information management.

Highlights

- 95 per cent of agencies responded to the Statement.
- Agencies have taken various pathways to implement digital information management.
- More than 90 per cent of agencies have moved away from a reliance on paper-based processes.

The role of the National Archives

Digital transformation is a journey rather than a project and there is no 'one size fits all' approach to its achievement. The National Archives continues to provide support and guidance to ensure Australian Government agencies meet the Digital Continuity 2020 policy requirements while supporting fully digital government.

For further information, please contact the Agency Service Centre

Australian Government information management Snapshot

The results of the 2017 Digital Continuity Statement are provided below.

The Statement required agencies to indicate their progress in relation to 10 specific elements of digital information management arranged against the three principles of the Digital Continuity Policy.

Each doughnut graph shows the percentage of agencies that have 'completed' the work around the element, of those where work is 'in progress' and of agencies yet to begin the essential work, identifying as 'not started'.

Analysis of results for each principle is provided.

Principle 1: information is valued

1. *My agency has established an information governance committee or a similar mechanism*

Target date 30 June 2016

Not started 13%
In progress 23%
Completed 64%
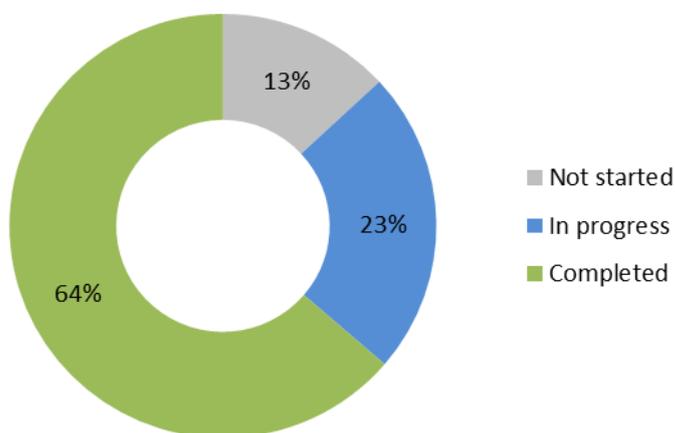
Key insight

Most agencies have established or identified an information governance accountability structure which supports effective whole-of-agency information governance. 36 per cent have yet to realise the benefits of this mechanism.

2. *My agency has an information governance framework*
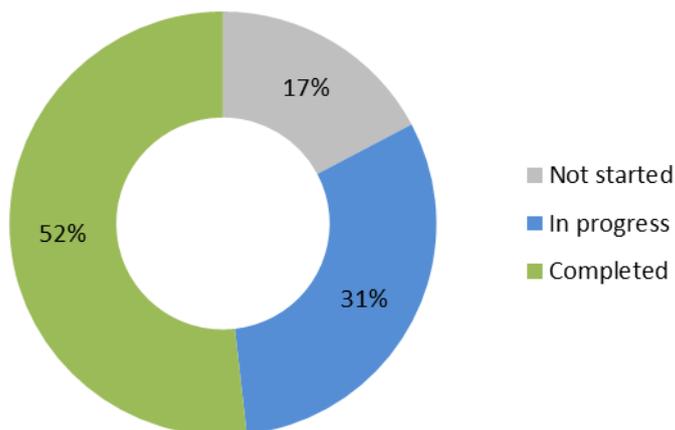
Target date: 31 December 2016

Legend:
- Not started
- In progress
- Completed

Chart values: 10% (Not started), 36% (In progress), 54% (Completed)
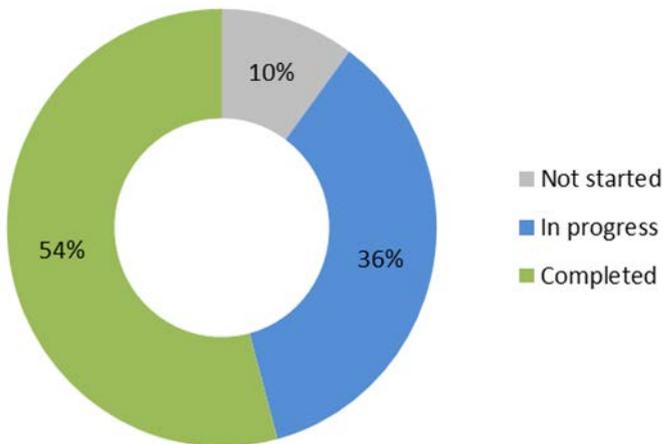
Key insights

While more than 50 per cent of agencies have established a functioning information governance framework, 46 per cent have yet to fully implement this key framework. A complete, functional and integrated framework supports effective governance of all information assets, reducing risks across the agency and supporting information usability.

3. *My agency has implemented a chief information governance officer (CIGO) role – either as a new position, or has included the responsibilities in an appropriate existing senior position*

Pathway/Target date 31 December 2017

Legend:
- Not started
- In progress
- Completed

Chart values: 17% (Not started), 31% (In progress), 52% (Completed)

Key insights

Most agencies have successfully implemented a CIGO role appropriate to their requirements. Only 17 per cent have yet to assign key information governance responsibilities to a senior officer. Without senior management support, information governance activities risk being overlooked.

4. ***My agency has identified the value of its information and manages it as an asset for as long as required.***

Target date: 31 December 2020

- Not started
- In progress
- Completed

11%
20%
69%
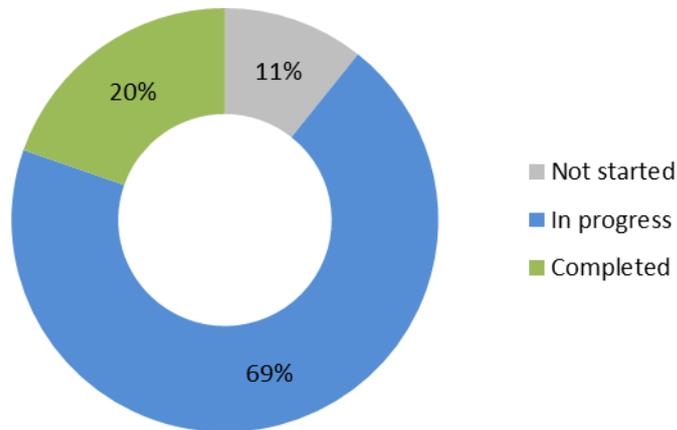
Key insights

Significant progress has been made by most agencies towards this 2020 target. Agencies that have yet to establish and fully implement mechanisms to identify and manage information assets for as long as required are creating significant risks for their business.

Principle 1 analysis

The Archives established an information governance framework as an essential 'first step' for agencies, identifying it in the policy as a recommended action with a target date of 31 December 2016. This was underpinned by a supporting culture that valued information as an asset. Establishing an information governance committee or similar structure and implementing the CIGO at a senior level were considered key steps in ensuring the ongoing commitment to and resourcing of information management roles across government.

The snapshot results indicate that – at least for some agencies –the lack of a fully implemented information governance framework does not preclude the agency from progressing other aspects of digital information management. But it does open the agency up to significant risks in the ongoing management of its information assets. Agencies who have not established these fundamental structures need to commit to making change as soon as possible.
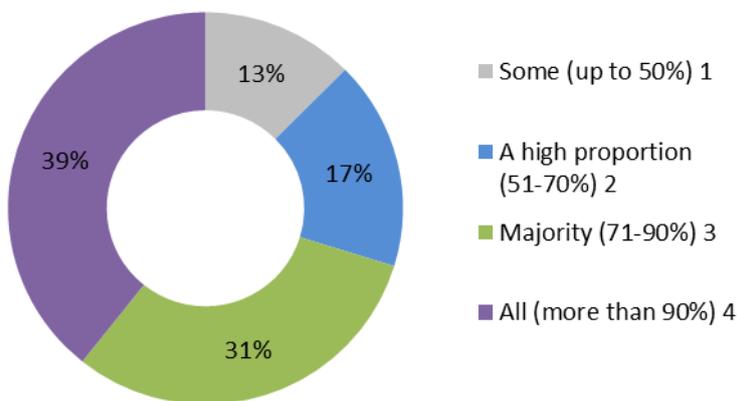
Principle 2: Information is managed digitally

5. *My agency manages information created in digital formats after 1 January 2016 digitally*

    Target date: 1 January 2016

    What proportion of your agency's information created in digital formats since 1 January 2016 is stored and managed digitally?

    (This statement only relates to information created since 2106, and excludes information created prior to this date)


Pie chart legend:
- Some (up to 50%) 1 — 13%
- A high proportion (51-70%) 2 — 17%
- Majority (71-90%) 3 — 31%
- All (more than 90%) 4 — 39%

Key insights

While significant progress has been made by 87 per cent of agencies to manage their digital information (after 1 January 2016) digitally, 13 per cent are not yet realising the significant benefits of working digitally.

6. *My agency has transformed most of its paper-based business processes to digital*

    Pathway/Target date: 31 December 2017

Pie chart legend:
- Not started — 3%
- In progress — 67%
- Completed — 30%
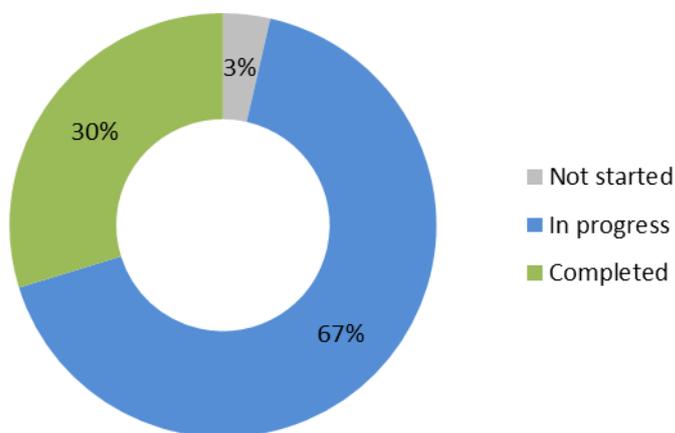
Key insights

Excellent progress has been made by agencies to transition their paper-based processes to more efficient digital ones. Responses indicate that most agencies are realising the benefits of working digitally.

7. *My agency routinely makes and records decisions using digital workflows and authorisations*

Pathway/Target date: 31 December 2020

This may be in an electronic records management system or another endorsed business system. Agencies selected 'completed' if digital workflows and authorisations have been integrated into business-as-usual processes
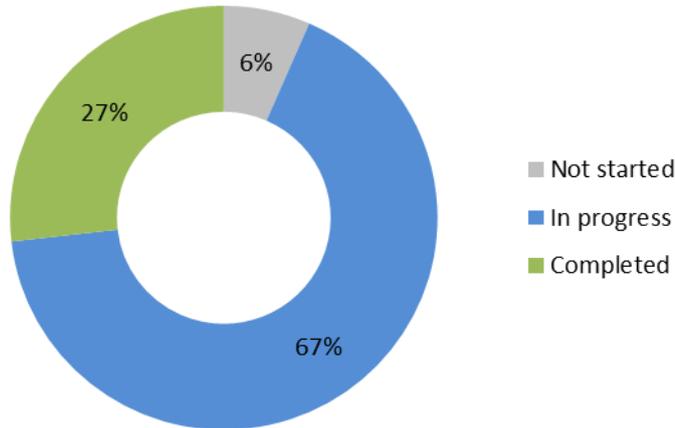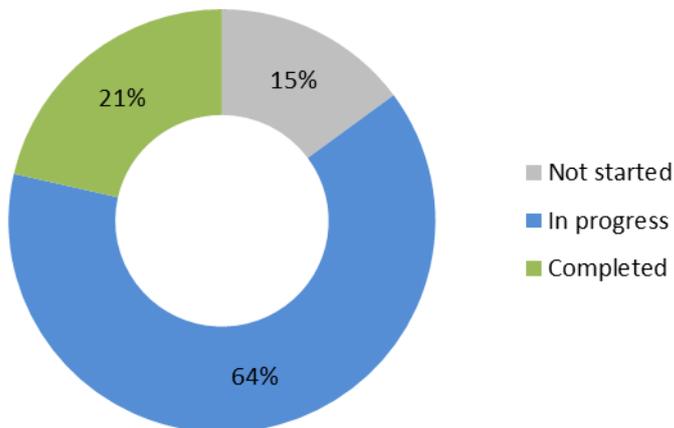

Key insights

The positive progress against this target indicates most agencies are successfully transitioning to using digital workflows and authorisations in business as usual. Digital authorisations improve transparency and accountability in government.

8. *My agency is progressively migrating information in analogue formats to digital format, where there is value for business*

Target date: 31 December 2020

Agencies selected 'completed' if the migration of information from analogue format to digital format is a fully integrated business-as-usual process, either conducted in-house or by a service provider.

Key insights

Good progress is being made by agencies to transition from analogue formats to digital formats to improve business efficiencies, including making information easier to find, share and reuse.

Principle 2 analysis

The results show most government business is now digital and related information is being managed digitally. Agencies are embracing digital tools and capabilities – such as workflows and digital authorisations – as effective ways to improve efficiencies and deliver quality service with reduced resourcing.

However, agency responses also indicate that there is a persistence in some sectors of the government in the use of paper to create, capture, store and manage government information (for example printing to paper for filing.) Archives recognises that the move away from paper to digital information management can take longer in some agencies than in others and is impacted by a variety of factors.

Where agencies have embraced digital tools and are managing their information assets digitally but without the support of a robust information governance framework, they increase the risks to their information.
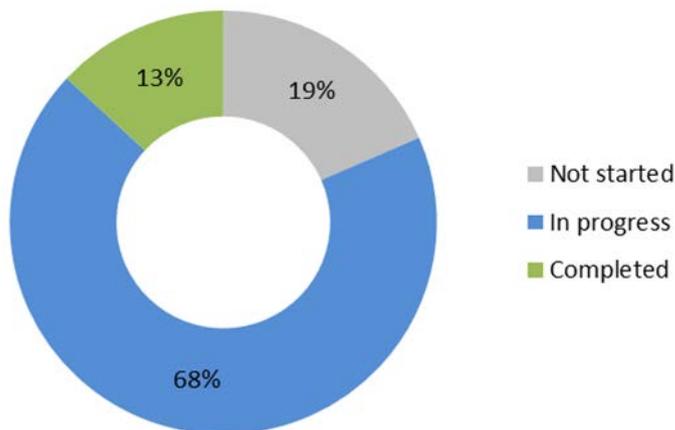
Principle 3: Information systems and processes are interoperable
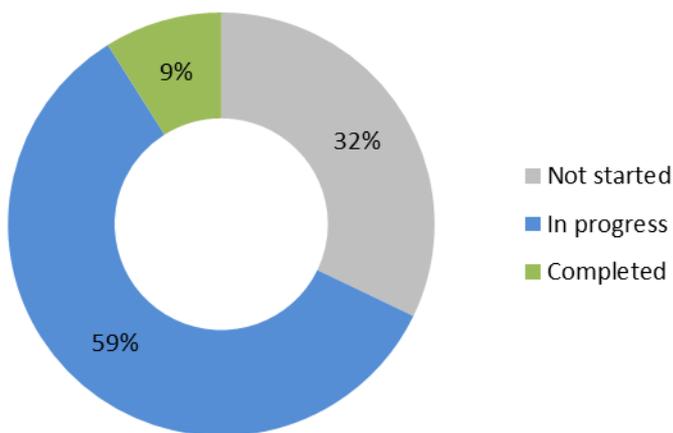
9. *My agency is progressively:*

- **evaluating all business systems to assess whether they capture the level of minimum metadata appropriate for the information they hold and manage**
- **implementing functionality where required**

Target date 31 December 2020

Evaluating

■	Not started
■	In progress
■	Completed

Evaluating chart values: 19% Not started, 68% In progress, 13% Completed

Implementing

■	Not started
■	In progress
■	Completed

Implementing chart values: 32% Not started, 59% In progress, 9% Completed
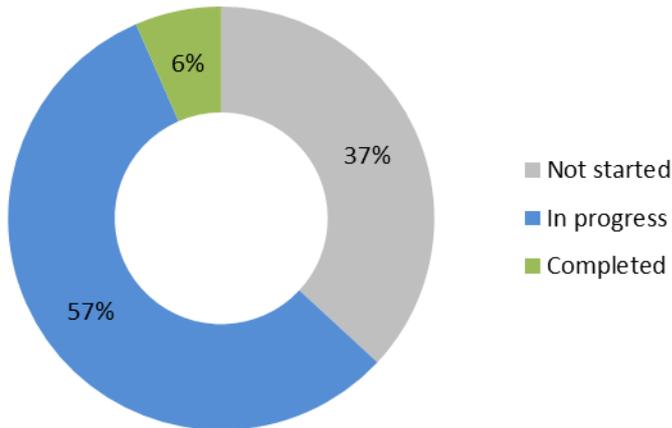
Key insights

Progress towards having business systems that capture the appropriate metadata for the business automatically is very encouraging. Results indicate that most agencies have committed to assessing their existing systems and planning to implement functionality where required. Many agencies are establishing this base for interoperability by including information management functionality as part of business system reviews, ICT investment and maintenance cycles.
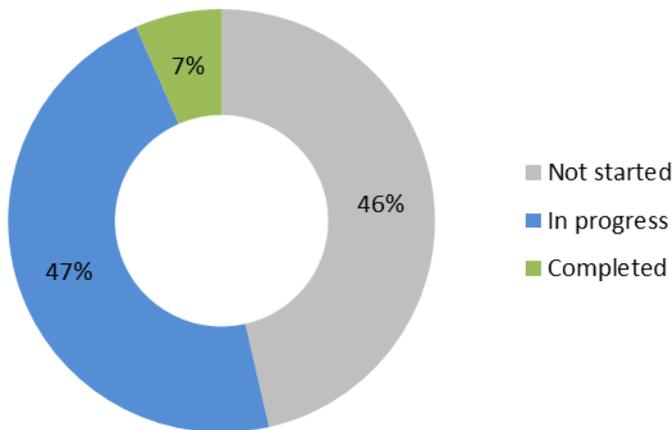
10. My agency is progressively:

- **evaluating all business systems against the Archives' business systems assessment framework to ensure they have appropriate functionality for the information they hold and manage)**
- **implementing functionality where required.**

Target date 31 December 2020

Evaluating

■	Not started
■	In progress
■	Completed

37% — Not started
57% — In progress
6% — Completed

Implementing

■	Not started
■	In progress
■	Completed

46% — Not started
47% — In progress
7% — Completed

Key insights

A small percentage of agencies have completed the move to business systems with appropriate information management functionality.

The number of agencies that have yet to take the first steps towards ensuring their business systems have appropriate functionality represents a risk to Australian Government information. This requires agencies to put appropriate management strategies be put in place.

This work requires long lead times and a commitment of resources to review existing systems and plan for future requirements.

Principle 3 analysis

It is to be expected that most agencies will report they are progressing in this principle which, more than the others, requires long-term planning and ongoing change management to implement. The need to assess systems, both existing and proposed, takes time and can be resource heavy, involving a variety of stakeholders, business owners and strategic leaders. Having identified gaps in functionality, agencies must plan how to efficiently replace and upgrade systems in line with business needs, IT refresh programs and existing budgets.

Agencies who have not started the systematic review of their business systems increase the risk of not being able to find and use their business information over time, ultimately increasing the cost of managing information.

Achieving interoperability across government requires broader engagement and commitment from cross-agency projects and programs. But individual agencies also need to proactively prepare for a future of shared information assets and open data. This requires systems that have appropriate functionality and agreed and standardised metadata.