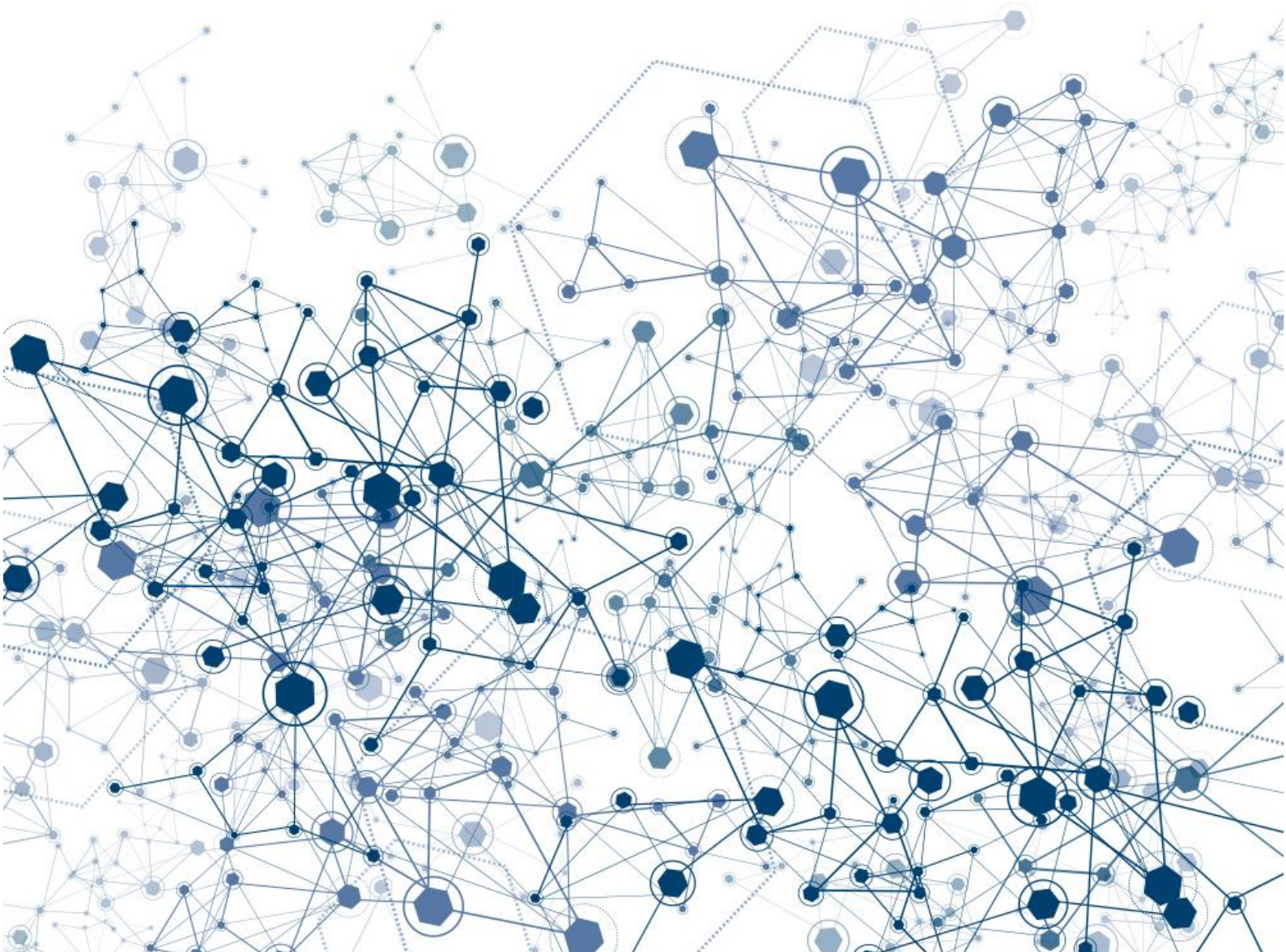




LOCATION INFORMATION ACCESS FRAMEWORK

CODE OF PRACTICE



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DOCUMENT VERSION CONTROL

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1. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

The Western Australian Land Information System (WALIS¹) was established by the Western Australian government in 1981 to promote shared access and best use of the state's location information² resources. WALIS partners, comprising state government agencies and local government authorities, as well as representative organisations for the private and research sectors, collectively facilitate access to location information in Western Australia. WALIS strives to harness the value of these location information assets through innovative partnerships.

This experience and well established practice in WA was drawn on to develop [Location Information Strategy](#) for WA in 2010, and the WA Whole of Government Open Data Policy, which was launched in July 2015.

Recognising the importance of providing clearer direction regarding the management of location information in Western Australia, a Location Information Access Framework (hereafter referred to as the 'Framework') has been developed with WALIS members to consolidate and update previously separate policies and practice guidelines in this area, and support the implementation of the WA Whole of Government [Open Data Policy](#).

2. FRAMEWORK INTENT

The Location Information Access Framework has been established to help facilitate ready access to the broadest possible range of fit-for-purpose³ location information for use by the WA community in accordance with the Location Information Strategy for WA and the WA Whole of Government Open Data Policy.

WALIS partners and other organisations with an interest in location information are encouraged to use the Framework to maximise the benefits of coordinated acquisition, management, publication and dissemination of location information for WA.

¹ For further information about WALIS, please visit <https://spur.wa.gov.au/better-business>

² Location information refers to any piece of information that has a location element, such as an address, a postcode, a building or a census area. Most information from diverse sources can be linked to a location. This term can be interchanged with spatial, geospatial, place and geographic information.

³ Fit-for-purpose location information implies that the information has been produced to meet the needs of its customers.

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3. FRAMEWORK STRUCTURE

The Framework comprises:

- the 'Code of Practice', this document, which describes the Background, Scope, Benefits, Governance, and most importantly establishes the principles of the Framework,
- the 'Guidelines', a supporting document which describes the key practices and other general provisions to be adopted to implement the principles of the Framework.

4. AUDIENCE

The Framework is targeted at WALIS partners and other organisations with an interest in location information in Western Australia. These include, but are not limited to:

- Western Australian government agencies, including statutory authorities and business enterprises
- Western Australian local government authorities
- Western Australian tertiary education and research institutions
- Australian government agencies that participate in the WALIS community
- government-funded community groups that manage and/ or use location information,
- private sector companies with an interest in supporting the community of Western Australia.

For ease of reading, the assortment of agencies, authorities, enterprises, institutions and groups described above will hereafter be collectively referred to as 'organisations'. All organisations that manage and publish location information for Western Australia are invited to adopt the Framework.

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5. STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

This Framework is consistent with the following aims described in the Location Information Strategy for WA⁴, endorsed by State Cabinet in 2012 to:

- reduce duplication of effort, not only in the collection and capture of information but also of the resources required to manage and maintain it
- improve access to information for all Western Australians, including knowledge of what information exists and how and where to find it
- enhance the way location information is packaged, to ensure it is fit-for-purpose and can be easily aligned, integrated and analysed
- increase the knowledge of, and access to, government information held in individual organisations, to ensure the full value of our asset is being realised,
- upgrade the capability of organisations to adhere to standards and custodianship principles.

6. SCOPE

The Framework:

- relates to best practice in the areas of acquisition, management, publication and distribution of location information,
- incorporates and updates previous WALIS policies and protocols in this area.

The Framework does not attempt to provide instruction-level advice, which are best defined and implemented by individual organisations themselves.

⁴ The Location Information Strategy presents location information as a necessary foundation for better decision making. The strategy has four goals:

- i. facilitate the state's growth and sustainable development through improved use of location information
- ii. enable better informed government, industry and community decision making
- iii. streamline the capture and maintenance of government data,
- iv. foster innovative thought, process and practice.

For more information, please visit https://spur.wa.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0005/18176/LIS2.0November2012.pdf

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7. BENEFITS

The Framework has been developed to improve awareness of and access to reliable location information in order to:

- improve the efficiency and effectiveness of government by encouraging better management practices and increased use of location information
- stimulate economic activity, drive innovation and encourage new location based services for the community and business
- increase productivity and improve personal and business decision making based on location information
- improve research outcomes by enhancing access of location information to researchers across all disciplines
- facilitate the WALIS objective of providing ready access to location information, which is accessible through the Shared Location Information Platform⁵ (SLIP),
- facilitate the WALIS objective of providing ready access to government information, which is accessible on the Open Data website data.wa.gov.au.

8. PRINCIPLES

The following principles underpin the Location Information Access Framework and support the implementation of the WA Whole of Government Open Data Policy.

Principle 1 – Availability

Location information generated by the WA public sector should be made available publicly in accordance with the WA whole-of government Open Data Policy.

By making government-held information readily available to the public, government decision-making can be made more transparent, and the opportunity for the community to participate in an informed way regarding planning, development and implementation activities by government will be substantially enhanced.

⁵ The Shared Location Information Platform (or SLIP) is an information-servicing environment implemented by WALIS to facilitate the discovery, viewing and accessing of WA's location information, anywhere and anytime, via a single channel.

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Principle 2 – Licensing

Location information generated by the WA public sector should be made available under flexible licences which meet the needs of consumers as far as practicable.

Adopting a flexible licensing approach geared to the needs of the consumer will help maximise the use of government information and provide opportunities for the development of new and innovative solutions to drive economic, environmental and social returns for the state.

The arrangements for someone wanting to access information are not dissimilar from someone wanting to access handyman equipment from a hire shop, or other like situations. In each case, an agreement (or license) describing the conditions of use, duration of the contract, costs involved, and other relevant information is implemented to protect both the provider and the user. The adoption of a flexible approach is more likely to suit the needs of both parties and achieve a better, overall outcome.

Principle 3 – Pricing

Location information generated by the WA public sector should be made available at zero cost, or the lowest cost possible in accordance with the WA Whole of Government Open Data Policy.

There is an increasing need to adopt a flexible approach to the pricing of information, evidenced by changes in public expectations, government fiscal policies, and attitudes within the emerging location information marketplace. Organisations need to have the flexibility to implement pricing mechanisms that balance the evolving needs of the community with the requirement for prudent fiscal management.

Many WALIS members provide access to their information products for no (or minimal) cost. However, a number of WALIS members are legislatively bound to impose charges upon government consumers for provision of selected location information products in order to comply with the state's competitive neutrality provisions and/ or to ensure the quality and availability of this information is maintained.

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Principle 4 – Discovery

Location information generated by the WA public sector should be made discoverable through data.wa.gov.au, and be accompanied with interpretive details that facilitates the appropriate understanding and use of the information.

A lot of time can be spent searching for information. Ensuring that government-held location information is discoverable and accessible through a common platform has been shown to reduce the effort (and cost) involved for the whole community to access this information. In WA location information should be made discoverable through data.wa.gov.au and the Shared Location Information Platform (SLIP), accompanied with metadata describing the condition/ characteristics/ context of this information and/ or a data dictionary or similarly suitable documentation that describes how the information is organised.

Principle 5 – Access

Location information generated by the WA public sector should be accessible in industry standard formats that promote its re-use, and provided with interpretive information.

Publication of location information using standard formats, accompanied with interpretive information, and in forms that enable it to be used by a wide audience maximises the benefits of these information assets to the whole community. Associated information that aids in the interpretation of location information, such as metadata and a data dictionary, also makes it easier to combine this information and generate new products.

The incorporation of standard formats has underpinned SLIP's successful delivery of location information services on behalf of provider organisations to a broad user base, for display and integration to other systems. This shared access has produced a level of collaboration amongst information providers that reflects the fellowship of WALIS, and the success to-date provides an excellent foundation for sharing information with a much greater range of consumers.

The Open Data website, data.wa.gov.au provides access to government data assets. The open data policy, guidelines and toolkit is available at <http://data.wa.gov.au/fact-sheets-and-toolkit>

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Principle 6 – Capture and Acquisition

The capture and acquisition of location information by the WA public sector should be conducted in a manner ensuring optimised use of resources, and delivered so that the value is maximised.

Disparate creation, capture and acquisition of location information introduces a number of inefficiencies, e.g. the captured information will be less likely to consider the wider usage opportunities, and there is the potential for someone else to unknowingly recapture the same (or similar) information.

The adoption in 1990 by WALIS of a coordinated information capture programme now called the Capture WA Program improved the buying power of the WALIS community, enhanced the efficiency of the products delivered, increased use of the captured information, and substantially reduced the duplication of effort in this space across state and local government.

Principle 7 – Implementation of the Framework

WA public sector agencies involved in the capture, management and sharing of location information should follow the Framework Guidelines to maximise the benefit of this information to the WA community.

It is important that all participants of the framework adopt a common approach when acquiring, managing, publishing and disseminating location information so that the information management practices are applied in a consistent manner.

The Framework incorporates the supporting guidelines document which addresses this need.

9. GOVERNANCE

The Location Information Access Framework has been developed through WALIS in support of the WA Whole of Government Open Data Policy and is integral to the implementation of this Policy across the WA public sector.

As the Framework supports the WA Whole of Government Open Data Policy, WA public sector agencies implementing the Policy, and involved in the capture, management and sharing of location information are expected to make every effort to comply with the Framework principles in order to maximise the value of location information to the state as set-out in the Location Information Strategy for WA.