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# Information Technology Strategic Plan [1]

## Topics:

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SM-09-003 Information Technology Strategic Plan

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## PURPOSE

Changes in its statutory and regulatory environment, authorized budget and client/consumer demographics, as well as other drivers may require a State agency to make business and operational adjustments. The agency may elect to expand or contract its geographic coverage of selected services, deploy additional services, or introduce administrative, financial and other controls which were not previously required or needed. The IT strategies employed by the agency in providing automated services must react to these adjustments as well as to changing capabilities of technology. For example, in the last thirty years State government has shifted its operational paradigm from heavy paper to electronic processing, with growing dependence on electronic networks and telecommunications. Workforce skills sought and employed by State agencies have changed accordingly.

It is critical to note that IT strategies are typically driven by business needs, and agency business personnel need to clearly articulate the agency's business strategy before an effective IT strategy can be developed. However, information technology is not to be viewed as merely a delivery mechanism. Innovative IT capabilities can influence the business strategies of the enterprise such as has been done through implementation of on-line drivers' license sales.

The objective of agency IT strategic planning is to put in place a road map for the agency's IT which is driven by the agency's business plans and strategies. Additionally, the road map should include those agency business benefits which can be derived reasonably from technological innovation. Annual updates, with communication to the State's enterprise functions of budget, planning and IT planning, allow the agency to maintain alignment with these enterprise functions, to secure support for critical funding and to collaborate with other agencies when feasible.

Agency participation in multi-agency collaborative service planning (reference the State's 5 policy planning areas driving Education, Health, Safety, Growth and State Management improvements) permits cross-agency improvements in services and operations, and efficiencies achieved through data and solutions sharing. Without comprehensive agency business and IT planning, collaboration across agencies would be, at best, ill informed and poorly effected.

## STANDARD

1. Agencies shall establish and use a process to prepare and to update an annual strategic plan for

information technology.

2. Process requirements for agency information technology strategic planning shall include:

- An environmental scan to clearly enunciate continuing business pressures as well as any new business drivers such as changing regulatory requirements.
- Any necessary bi-directional education for agency staffing concerning agency business and information technology.
- Development of business strategies and goals in reaction from business drivers based on a discovery process conducted with each business unit and aggregated into the sum of requirements to be met by the IT organization. If the agency operates under a management Board, the Board should participate in this process.
- A business planning process to turn strategies into specific tactical plans. This aspect of planning consists of an assessment of the current IT portfolio for strengths and weaknesses, feasibility analyses of alternative strategies and tactics, feasibility analysis of potential automated solutions to meet IT requirements, and resource assessments. A tactical plan will surface as an operating model and migration plan for IT.
- The agency IT architecture impact. Architecture serves as the bridge between the business strategy and the technology implementation and is a key driver of IT planning. It defines the as-is and the to-be application portfolio, as well as initiatives to improve the portfolio.
- Resource sourcing strategies to determine if it is feasible to deliver all that is needed in the required time period and how the necessary resources, capabilities, technologies and management competencies will be sourced. This includes a high-level IT risk management approach, a workforce assessment with a high-level skill inventory and needs assessment based on the expected demand and a management strategy to facilitate and enable needed work to proceed smoothly and to provide necessary management support incorporating dependencies between initiatives/projects and the critical path of execution.
- A funding requirements analysis utilizing a business case approach to prepare plan details. Business cases shall appropriately identify planned mandatory, sustaining and discretionary investments for information technology and provide estimated costs using a "total cost of operation" basis in which separate costing is provided for development costs, costs for infrastructure investments and a stream of annual operating costs.
- A buy-in from business unit stakeholders on plans showing how IT will contribute to the agencies business priorities.
- A mediation process to facilitate mutual agreement of agency stakeholders on plans and strategies.
- A buy-in from the managing Board indicating understanding and approval of the proposed strategies, level of risk, operating model and management approach of the proposed plan. Typically, this will further indicate the plan's alignment with the organization's management philosophy and operating style.

3. A final IT strategic plan should include a description of the current and future business and a supporting IT operation model, high-level programs and migration plans.

4. The IT strategic plan informs the State Strategic Plan hosted by the Governor's Office of planning and Budget as well as the agency's annual operating budget request and supplemental budget request.

## REFERENCES

1. "State Strategic Planning Guidelines", Governor's Office of Planning and Budget, <http://www.opb.state.ga.us> [4], Feb 8, 2008
2. "Prioritized Program Budget, General Policy Guidelines and Preparation Procedures", <http://www/opb.state.ga.us> [5], modified annually
3. "CobiT 4.1", Section PO1, IT Governance Institute, 2007

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