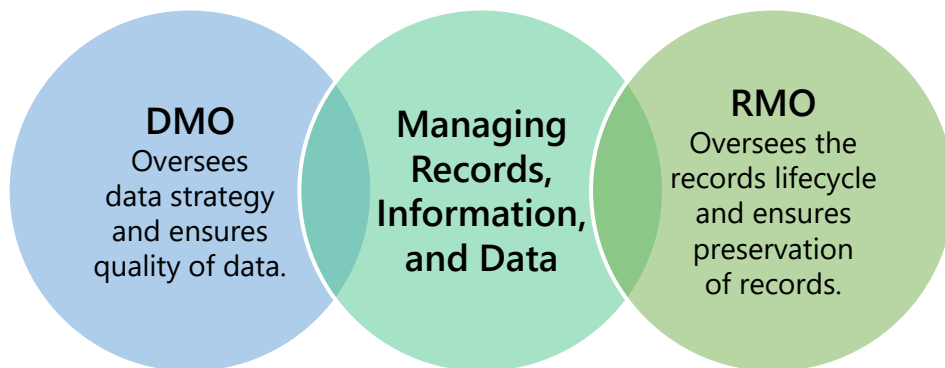# Governing Data, Records, and Information Together

A Quick-Start Guide for Effective Collaboration Between Data and Records Management Officers presented by DIR and TSLAC

Introduction

State agencies in Texas must designate specific roles for ensuring the accessibility and protection of valuable government information assets: a data management officer (DMO) and a records management officer (RMO). Each role requires specialized expertise and skills, but they overlap in areas of the classification, retention, protection, and disposition of records, information, and data.

DMO
Oversees data strategy and ensures quality of data.

Managing Records, Information, and Data

RMO
Oversees the records lifecycle and ensures preservation of records.

The Department of Information Resources (DIR) Office of the Chief Data Officer (OCDO) supports these roles by implementing best practices for managing and securing data in accordance with state privacy laws and data privacy classifications, as well as providing guidance for conducting a maturity assessment of an agency's data governance program.

DMOs and RMOs coordinate with the Texas State Library and Archives Commission (TSLAC) State and Local Records Management team to ensure that the agency's records management program and retention schedule is applicable to all types of data storage media. TSLAC provides training and guidance on how to promote the records management program within each agency.

This guidance document highlights the importance of collaboration between DMOs and RMOs – as well as other key stakeholders such as an information security officer or privacy officer – in effectively establishing a data governance program. See below for an overview of best practices and industry standards which promote compliance with Texas' legal and regulatory frameworks, as well as links to further helpful resources.

Guiding Principles and Frameworks

Understanding the relationships between data, information, and records helps both DMOs and RMOs appreciate each other's roles and responsibilities and how they contribute to the organization's overall information management goals. This understanding can enhance communication, collaboration, and the successful implementation of data governance and records and information management (RIM) practices.

The graphic below shows that records are made up of information, and information is made up of data. Conversely, data can be manipulated to create meaningful information, which can then be used to create records.
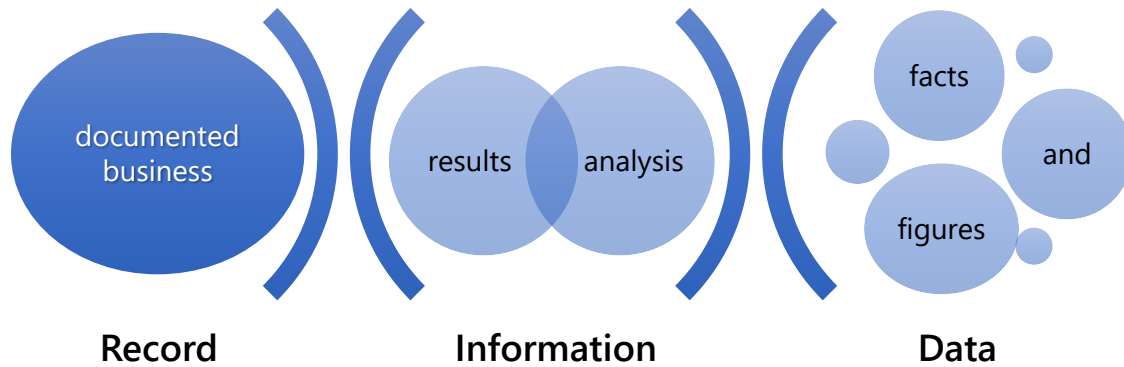
RIM Principles

There are common principles for both records and data management, which help provide a framework and roadmap for practitioners initiating or revitalizing data governance programs.

The Principles, developed by ARMA International, offer a standard of conduct for governing information and guidelines by which to audit and assess the governance program. Several of the principles, such as accountability, transparency, and integrity, are specifically mentioned in the Electronic Records Standards and Procedures (13 TAC §6.91-6.98) published by TSLAC.

Maturity Models

Among other activities, the DMO is responsible for conducting a data maturity assessment per Texas Govt Code 2054.137(b)(3)(D) of the agency's governance program, but they can't do it alone. The DMO and RMO should work together with other key stakeholders in the agency to complete the assessment.

The Data Management and Analytics Maturity Assessment (DMAMA), developed by DIR's Office of the Chief Data Officer, provides an easy online questionnaire to rate the current and future status of the agency's data governance program based on 11 related subject areas.

Agencies may use any data maturity assessment model of their choosing and it is recommended to conduct the assessment biennially to benchmark and monitor growth of your agency's program and see opportunities for taking it to the next level.

Challenges and Solutions

DMOs and RMOs may face various common challenges. However, collaboration offers numerous benefits by enhancing decision-making, improving data quality and compliance, increasing productivity, and reducing costs. To help DMOs and RMOs learn and share concepts and terminology, each of the following challenges and solutions are noted with applicable RIM Principles and related maturity assessment objectives outlined in the Texas Data Management Framework (TDMF).

Governance and Leadership

Challenge:

DMOs and RMOs may struggle to launch governance initiatives if executive or senior-level management lack oversight and awareness of data governance and records management programs at their agency.

Related RIM Principles: Accountability, Transparency, Compliance

Solution:

Collaborate to 'sell' the strategy. Deliver a value proposition to executives to communicate the benefits of new data governance initiatives and how success depends on endorsement and support from the top.

Related TDMF Knowledge Components: Data Management, Data Governance, Data Quality

People and Culture

Challenge:

Individuals within the organization, particularly senior-level management, may be resistant to change, hindering the adoption of new collaborative processes or technologies.

Related RIM Principles: Accountability, Transparency

Solution:

Foster an organizational culture of continuous improvement and innovation. Provide resources that highlight the benefits of collaboration and demonstrate the positive impact on the organization's overall performance. Engage stakeholders in the decision-making process and address their concerns to promote buy-in.

Related TDMF Knowledge Components: Data Management, Organizational Change Management

Capacity and Capability

Challenge:

DMOs and RMOs may have varying levels of expertise and knowledge in their respective fields of work, which can impact their ability to collaborate effectively.

Related RIM Principles: Integrity, Protection

Solution:

Review each other's roles and identify areas of overlap and gaps in knowledge. Seek out and share ongoing professional development opportunities, such as workshops, seminars, or certifications, to keep both parties up to date with the latest trends and best practices in both fields.

Related TDMF Knowledge Component: Data Management Organizational Structure, Big Data and Data Science

Challenge:

DMOs and RMOs may use different terminologies or metadata standards, leading to confusion and miscommunication.

Related RIM Principles: Integrity, Availability, Retention

Solution:

Develop a shared glossary and common metadata standards. This will help to ensure the accessibility, readability, and usability of data and records.

Related TDMF Knowledge Components: Data Governance, Metadata Management

Innovation

Challenge:

Working independently without shared visibility and aligned priorities can lead to a siloed, disjointed approach to RIM and data management, resulting in inefficiencies, missed opportunities for improvement, or potential non-compliance with requirements.

Related RIM Principles: Transparency, Protection, Compliance

Solution:

Maintain clear communication channels and arrange for regular meetings amongst key stakeholders to discuss current difficulties, best practices, and new advancements in the sector. Conduct a data maturity assessment annually to pinpoint areas for enhancement and confirm the successful implementation of best practices.

Related TDMF Knowledge Components: Data Governance, Data Management Maturity Assessment

Technology

Challenge:

The agency's retention schedules, policies, and processes haven't been updated in accordance with changes in technology and storage rules.

Related RIM Principles: Compliance, Retention, Disposition

Solution:

Ensure the agency's RIM program encompasses all data storage mediums, including paper, electronic, and alternative formats, and ensure that the data management program covers retention, disposition, and data classification requirements.

Related TDMF Knowledge Components: Data Security, Data Storage and Operations, Data Architecture, Data Warehouse and Business Intelligence, Data Integration and Interoperability

Challenge:

The organization may lack the necessary technology or tools to support effective collaboration between DMOs and RMOs.

Solution:

Evaluate the organization's current technology infrastructure and identify gaps that need to be addressed. Invest in tools and technology that facilitate collaboration, such as integrated data management platforms or collaborative project management software. Ensure that technology solutions are scalable, secure, and user-friendly to support ongoing collaboration.

Related RIM Principles: Protection, Availability

Related TDMF Knowledge Components: Data Governance, Data Modeling and Design, Data Storage and Operations

Action Plan / Next Steps

1. Build a collaborative framework: DMOs and RMOs should establish a shared framework for collaboration. This could include regular meetings, shared objectives, and a common glossary to ensure clear communication and mutual understanding.

2. Promote executive awareness: Develop a compelling value proposition for data governance initiatives and present it to senior-level management. Highlight the importance of their support and involvement in promoting these initiatives.

3. Encourage culture change: Implement programs or initiatives that foster a culture of continuous improvement and innovation. This could include regular training sessions, workshops, or seminars to discuss the importance of data governance and records management.

4. Professional development: DMOs and RMOs should jointly identify areas for skills improvement and seek out relevant professional development opportunities. Sharing insights and knowledge from these activities can help improve collaborative efforts.

5. Develop shared standards: DMOs and RMOs should work together to develop a shared glossary and common metadata standards, enhancing data and record readability, usability, and accessibility.

6. Conduct regular maturity assessments: Make use of tools such as the Data Management and Analytics Maturity Assessment (DMAMA) to conduct regular evaluations of your data governance program. This can help identify areas for improvement and track progress over time.

7. Update retention schedules and policies: Regularly review and update the organization's retention schedules, policies, and processes in line with changes in technology, data storage rules, and other relevant factors.

8. Invest in collaborative tools: Evaluate your current technology infrastructure and identify areas where investment in new tools could enhance collaboration and effectiveness. Ensure any new technologies are secure, user-friendly, and scalable.

Summary

Collaboration isn't just a buzzword when it comes to initiating a data or information governance program. Designated DMOs, RMOs, and other key stakeholders must work together to build the foundation and strategy for moving their programs forward for the benefit of the whole agency or institute of higher education. A shared understanding of current and future challenges will help lead both data and records managers to solutions and a clear path toward the next level.

Further Guidance and Resources

Department of Information Resources – Office of the Chief Data Officer
https://dir.texas.gov/office-chief-data-officer | OCDO@dir.texas.gov

- DMO Responsibilities:
  https://statutes.capitol.texas.gov/Docs/GV/htm/GV.2054.htm#2054.137

- Texas Data Management Framework (TDMF).

Texas State Library and Archives Commission – State and Local Records Management
https://www.tsl.texas.gov/slrm | slrminfo@tsl.texas.gov

- Bulletin 1: Electronic Records Standards and Procedures:
  https://www.tsl.texas.gov/slrm/pubs/bulletin1

- Bulletin 4: State Records Management Laws https://www.tsl.texas.gov/slrm/pubs/bulletin4

- The Texas Record blog: The Relationships Between Data, Information, and Records
  https://www.tsl.texas.gov/slrm/blog/2022/05/the-relationships-between-data-information-and-records/

Industry Literature

- Data Management Body of Knowledge (the DMBOK) – DAMA International
  https://www.dama.org/cpages/body-of-knowledge

- Information Governance Body of Knowledge (the IGBoK) – ARMA International
  https://www.arma.org/page/IGBOK

- The Principles® (Generally Accepted Recordkeeping Principles®) – ARMA International
  https://www.arma.org/page/Principles