Province of British Columbia

Core Administrative and Descriptive Metadata Standard

Version 1.0.1

November 3, 2023

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Purpose

This standard specifies the foundational set of core administrative and descriptive metadata elements to be applied to digital government information, as well as the purpose and characteristics of Metadata Application Profiles.

Description

The scope of this standard is limited to defining the core administrative and descriptive metadata elements that summarize digital government information resources, as well as associated Metadata Application Profiles that outline the metadata elements applicable to specific business purposes.

Metadata and Metadata Application Profiles are important tools for providing context and meaning about information resources, to support understanding, sharing, findability, interoperability, and reuse.

The Standard is based upon the Dublin Core Metadata Element Set defined in ISO 15836.

Application

All entities (hereafter, "ministries") identified in Core Policy and Procedures Manual Chapter 1, section 1.2.4.

Authority

Core Policy and Procedures Manual, Chapter 12.

Advice on this standard

For questions or comments regarding this Standard, please contact:

> BC Data Service Division
> Ministry of Citizens' Services
> Data Systems and Services Client Hub

Review

This standard must be reviewed for effectiveness and updated after a reasonable implementation time.

REQUIREMENTS

Core Metadata Elements

The following set of core metadata elements apply to digital government information:

1. Creator
2. Date Created
3. Date Modified
4. Description
5. Format
6. Information Schedule
7. Security Classification
8. Title
9. Unique Identifier

ELEMENT: CREATOR

Definition:	The entity which created the information resource.
Purpose:	Provides context and identifies the entity which created or compiled the information resource.
Usage:	Provide the name of the service, person, organization, office, or program area which created the information resource. Use the official name and follow other naming conventions and standards to ensure consistency with other metadata relating to the same Creator. There is potential to have more than one Creator to provide additional value and organizational context, e.g., Ministry of Finance, Bob Smith, Data Division.

ELEMENT: DATE CREATED

Definition:	The date on which an information resource is created or compiled.
Purpose:	Enables users to find information resources by limiting retrieval according to specific dates or date ranges. Helps users assess the relevance of the content to their information needs. Enables producers to set the date of creation using a controlled format.
Usage:	Date may be used to express temporal information at any level of granularity. Recommended best practice is to use the IM IT Date and Time Standard, i.e., YYYY-MM-DD.

ELEMENT: DATE MODIFIED

Definition:	The date on which an information resource was modified or changed.
Purpose:	Helps users distinguish when the content of an information resource was changed after it was initially issued. Provides evidence of accountability and quality control by tracking revisions to the content of an information resource.
Usage:	Date may be used to express temporal information at any level of granularity. Recommended best practice is to use the IM IT Date and Time Standard, i.e., YYYY-MM-DD. Date Created equals Date Modified if it has not yet been modified.

ELEMENT: DESCRIPTION

Definition:	A concise narrative of the content of an information resource.
Purpose:	Use of Description provides an explanation of the contents of an information resource to assist in retrieval and to help users determine if an information resource is relevant to their needs. The description can also describe the purpose or function of an information resource (what it was intended to accomplish), what the information resource "is" or what it measures, and potential uses.
Usage:	Description may include but is not limited to an abstract, a table of contents, a graphical representation, or a free-text account of the information resource.

ELEMENT: FORMAT

Definition:	The file formats, media types, and data exchange languages used in the archiving, distribution, and storage of an information resource.
Purpose:	Supports retrieval, as well as control, storage, preservation, and access management of information resources through time. It can alert users to the existence of requirements for software, hardware, or equipment to display, use, or manage a resource.
Usage:	Recommended best practices is to use a controlled vocabulary, e.g., National Archives (TNA) of the United Kingdom.

ELEMENT: INFORMATION SCHEDULE

Definition:	An identifier for the relevant information schedule.
Purpose:	Enables the management and disposition of the information in accordance with the Information Management Act, which requires government information to be held, transferred, archived, or disposed of in accordance with an approved information schedule.
Usage:	Recommended best practice is to use the following format: [INFORMATION SCHEDULE] [PRIMARY]-[SECONDARY] e.g., 'ARCS 100-25', 'GEDU 24000-04'. If there is no approved Information Schedule, use the term "Pending" as the element value.

ELEMENT: SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

Definition:	An information security designation that identifies the level of protection assigned to an information resource.
Purpose:	Ensures that the information resource has been reviewed and a level of security classification is applied to government information based on the degree of harm that could reasonably be expected to result from unauthorized disclosure.
Usage:	Following the Information Security Classification Standard. If the information is currently unclassified, use the term "Pending" as the element value.

ELEMENT: TITLE

Definition:	The name given to an information resource.
Purpose:	A meaningful title that describes the content of an information resource concisely, and supports access, identification, and control of content.
Usage:	Useful titles distinguish one information resource from another, so organizations should establish consistent naming practices for all forms of information resources. When possible, the title should be taken as it appears in the content of the described information resource. Provide the most full and formal name.

ELEMENT: UNIQUE IDENTIFIER

Definition:	A unique number, code, or reference value assigned to an information resource within a given context.
Purpose:	Supports identification of an information resource, helps to prevent duplication, and facilitates retrieval, as users may retrieve an information resource by specific identifiers.
Usage:	Recommended best practice is to identify the information resource by means of a string conforming to a formal identification system, that has business meaning, e.g., Standard Book Number (ISBN), Digital Object Identifier (DOI), Uniform Resource Name (URN).

Metadata Application Profile (MAP)

A MAP is a declaration of the metadata elements used by an organization, information resource, application, or use case. A MAP may incorporate elements from one or more metadata element sets that meet the business needs, including the set of elements specified in this standard.

A MAP for a given information resource should minimally specify the following characteristics for each of its metadata elements:

- Definition
- Purpose
- Usage (including valid values and relevant examples)
- Obligation (e.g., mandatory, or optional)

Supporting Documents

Core Administrative & Descriptive Metadata Standard Guidelines

DEFINITIONS

Note: definitions in grey text are already defined in other documents.

Dublin Core Metadata Element Set: The Dublin Core Metadata Element Set are terms which can be used to describe information resources.

Government Information: As defined in Part 1 of the *Information Management Act*. Can include both data and records.

Information Resource: A set or aggregate of digital government information that is maintained in digital format, and may be accessed, searched, and retrieved via electronic means. Includes recordkeeping systems, databases, datasets, files, web pages, email messages, pdf documents, etc.

Information Schedule: provides a timetable that governs the lifecycle of government information. Information schedules specify how records are managed to ensure that government information is kept for as long as required and authorize the holding, transfer, and disposal of records.

Interoperability: The ability of different types of computers, networks, operating systems, and applications to work together effectively, without prior communication, to exchange information in a useful and meaningful manner.

Metadata: Metadata is a set of structured data that describes and gives additional detail about an information resource. Metadata helps identify, manage, and share information resources.

REVISION HISTORY

Version	Date	Notes
1.0	Oct. 13, 2022	Approved by Hayden Lansdell, ADM, BC Data Service.
1.0.1	Nov. 3, 2023	Fixed broken link to Information Security Classification Standard; updated Application and Advice contact.