



Divisions of General Practice

Information Management Maturity Framework
(IMMF)

**Toolkit – Staff surveys of awareness
and compliance with IM principles,
policies and standards**



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Purpose

The purpose of the “Staff surveys of awareness and compliance with IM principles, policies and standards” tool is to assist Divisions to address the action task below.

Action Task	Capacity Gap	IMMF Element
Run surveys to test staff awareness and compliance with IM principles, policies and standards.	Defined to Managed	IM Management

This task should have been identified from the Information Management Maturity Framework (IMMF) gap analysis and toolkit specification.

This tool provides advice for Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) who wish to adopt a standard survey methodology with the survey content varied to meet the subject area, measuring awareness and compliance with information management (IM) principles, policies and standards.

This tool shares several components with the other survey tools: “Staff surveys of awareness and compliance with IM legislation and community standards” and “Staff surveys of awareness and compliance with the information lifecycle (ILC)”. It extends the scope of the latter to reflect a growing experience and expertise in Divisions as they progress through the IMMF.

This tool should be used in conjunction with the earlier tools: “Training pack for IM definitions and principles” and “Sample IM policies and standards.” It is the outcomes of these tools that the survey is testing for awareness and compliance.

Parts of this tool are designed to be re-usable for other survey topics represented by other IMMF tools for:

- Staff surveys of awareness and satisfaction with the Division’s IM processes and systems
- Staff surveys of awareness and compliance with IM legislation and community standards
- Staff surveys of awareness and compliance with the ILC

Specifically, Parts 1 and 4 of this tool are reused in each of the other tools listed above.

Explanatory notes

This tool assists CEOs to gather evidence based feedback from their staff, on the Division’s use of IM principles, policies and standards. It is not uncommon when dealing with the Division’s IM policies and standards, that there are significant differences between the awareness and compliance of senior management and the Board of a Division and the rest of the Division’s staff.

By developing and using staff surveys, a CEO can implement a process to gather direct feedback on the effectiveness of the Division’s IM principles, policies and standards. This feedback can then be used to initiate Plan Do Study Act (PDSA) cycles for continuous improvement in these areas.



Survey design and the analysis of survey response data are specialist fields and this IMMF tool provides basic information. It is not an alternative to appropriate consultation with experts in these fields when a Division is contemplating a large scale or more complex survey.

The reference sources for this tool range from material primarily drawn from the earlier quoted IMMF tools and survey techniques and issues (summarised in Fritz Scheuren's: *What is a Survey?*). A full list of references is cited at the end of the document.

Within most Divisions, staff surveys will be limited in terms of the numbers of people responding, and it is important to note that the data that can be gathered is most likely able to provide indicative information as opposed to statistically rigorous material. This tool can provide pointers to aspects of a Division's IM processes and systems that would benefit from some form of intervention, including an assessment of the effectiveness of ongoing induction training.

Instructional design

This tool consists of four parts:

Part 1 – Principles underpinning the use of staff surveys

Part 2 – Estimating awareness and compliance

Part 3 – Survey structure and sample survey questions

Part 4 – Survey technology and tools

Part 1 – Principles underpinning the use of staff surveys.

This Part presents a brief discussion of survey fundamentals when applied internally within an organisation. It should be used as a general guide for CEOs and their staff to assist them to create survey instruments that generate information adequate for the Divisions' continuous improvement objectives for awareness and compliance of IM principles, policies and standards.

Part 2 – Estimating awareness and compliance

Part 2 focuses on survey techniques for estimating levels of awareness and compliance from internal staff respondents.

Part 3 – Survey structure and sample survey questions.

Part 3 provides examples of survey questions and statements including a widely-used method for estimating awareness and compliance based on the Likert method.

Part 4 – Survey technology and tools.

Part 4 briefly discusses technology options for conducting surveys.



Summary of outcomes and resource

Workstreams	Outcomes	Resources
New processes or procedures to be adopted	CEOs develop and implement a survey to measure staff awareness and compliance with the Division's IM principles, policies and standards.	This tool is designed to be self-administered.
Technology to be developed or acquired	CEOs have an adaptable, paper-based or online survey tool for estimating staff awareness and compliance with the Division's IM principles, policies and standards.	
Culture to be influenced	Staff feedback on awareness and compliance with the Division's IM principles, policies and standards is used for continuous improvement.	



Part 1: Principles Underpinning the Survey Method

Achieving a sound and consistent approach to creating and using surveys relies on a foundation of four core principles:

1. **The method is the servant, not the master.** Survey design is important and so too is survey implementation.
 - 1.1. Aim for a balance amongst efficiency, data quality and significance.
 - 1.2. Decide whether to identify respondents or not; profiling anonymous respondents.
 - 1.3. Choose the most appropriate approach to the survey.

Staff surveys need to be scaled and delivered in many Divisions to accommodate small numbers of respondents. For a small number of staff, the IMMF survey could take the form of a few informal questions asked verbally and the responses recorded by the CEO at one of the regular staff meetings.

In larger Divisions where staff members may be more difficult to bring together, an email survey or the use of an online survey tool such as *SurveyMonkey*¹ could be a better choice.

Sensitive issues are best surveyed through anonymous paper-based responses. However, this approach might be impractical in very small Divisions. In some situations, it might be better for Divisions to work collaboratively and cross-survey each other, or use the services of an experienced independent focus group facilitator.

If respondents are routinely surveyed, it is poor practice to ask them to repeatedly re-enter administrative information that remains unchanged over time. Worse still, is to ask a recipient to re-enter the same information in more than one place in the same response. A preferred approach, for example with contact details, is to ask a respondent to nominate their job description, only if there is a difference from previous responses to this information.

Recipients who are to be identified may alternatively be shown what the Division believes to be their administrative data and then be asked to only correct anything that has changed.

2. **Understanding respondent psychology** is also important.

- 2.1. Attitudinal questions have no correct answer and opinions are difficult to validate.
- 2.2. Avoid leading questions.
- 2.3. Avoid asking the respondents to comment on themselves or their co-workers.

From a CEO's perspective, it is important to remember that an IMMF management problem may not be perceived by staff.

Similarly, the nature of an issue and how a question is asked has the potential to generate responses that the staff believe the CEO wants to hear. Many survey respondents seek to avoid confrontation and are sparing with bad news, while others seek any opportunity to repeatedly and forcefully express their views.

CEOs should ensure that respondents to staff surveys are informed about what the outcomes of the survey were and what action(s), if any, will result from their investment of time and thought into making a response.

3. **It is easy to ask the wrong question** and also easy to ask the right question the wrong way.

- 3.1. Stand in the shoes of the intended respondent.
- 3.2. Consider the question wording, style, type and sequence.
- 3.3. Minimise the survey length and clarify the layout.

¹ See website details in the References



Survey respondents often face the daunting task of offering an opinion based on their interpretation of the meaning and weight of comparative adjectives such as “significant” or “urgent”. Survey designers should aim for language comprehension levels about those of early high school students, minimising the use of jargon and emotive words. In an example statement below, instead of describing induction training as “good” or “poor”, the term “adequate for me to do my job effectively” helps to avoid different perceptions about what the other relative terms might mean.

A corollary is that the responses should provide information that is actionable from a CEO’s perspective. It is not sufficient, for example to ask whether respondents are satisfied or dissatisfied about a service, system or procedure and their degree of satisfaction. It is better to also find out what aspects drive respondents views.

Pre-testing survey formats, and questions or statements is a proven means of ensuring that the survey will be consistently well-understood.

Low response rates are highly correlated with opaque, irrelevant or ambiguous questions and surveys that have even the slightest appearance of being too time consuming to read and complete.

Likewise, response rates will be low if the survey recipients feel that no action will follow, regardless of their responses, suggesting that some surveys will benefit from pre-marketing.

4. Build in some reality checks

Superior surveys build in some checks to expose donkey voting and false responses. The most frequently used technique is to randomise questions and statements and to phrase some in the negative and others in the positive. This forces respondents to read carefully and to work out that responding in the positive to a positive statement would mean that they need to respond to the same issue presented in the negative, with a negative answer.

Responses that are all “very positive” or “very negative” may reflect a poor survey design and / or a worthless response, particularly when two or more statements or questions are contradictory if answered the same way.



Part 2: Estimating Awareness and Compliance

Awareness and compliance are quite different constructs, demanding different approaches to estimation.

- Awareness – estimated indirectly through indicator topics or self-disclosure.
- Compliance – estimated through attitude survey, observation or audit sampling.

Compliance can be measured by assessing individuals' attitudes and correlating these with the likelihood that they will comply with policy and procedure. Actual behaviour can be measured directly through sampling a number of transactions and checking to see that they were undertaken properly according to documented policy and process, accurately and consistently. For example, a piece of information was captured and filed securely and that it was retrievable with acceptable time and effort, was distributed properly and destroyed in accordance with legislative and organisational requirements.

Awareness can be estimated by surveys using instruments that are variations on the Likert scale.

Brief discussion of the Likert scale

The Likert scale is probably the most widely-used tool in psychometric surveys. It is characterised by making a statement (not by posing a question) and asking respondents to nominate the extent to which they agree – or disagree with the statement by choosing one of the following options, or something similar:

1. Strongly disagree.
2. Disagree.
3. Neither agree nor disagree – or no opinion.
4. Agree.
5. Strongly agree.

Some scales are extended to include a zero which can mean “I do not know – or that this statement is not relevant for me”. As it is for the other scores, it is important to define terms at the start of the survey and to be consistent in their use. In other cases, survey designers use a four point scale, dropping out the option for “fence-sitting” (in the above example, #3).

This scale is described as “balanced” since there are equal numbers of negative and positive responses offered. Depending on the nature of the subject of the survey, some designers use an unbalanced scale. For example, a negatively balanced scale on the left and a positively-balanced scale on the right:

- | | | |
|---|----|-------------------------------|
| 1. Very strongly disagree | or | 1. Strongly disagree |
| 2. Strongly disagree | | 2. Disagree |
| 3. Disagree | | 3. Neither agree nor disagree |
| 4. Neither agree nor disagree – or no opinion | | 4. Agree |
| 5. Agree | | 5. Strongly agree |
| 6. Strongly agree | | 6. Very strongly agree |

The decision to use either a balanced or an unbalanced scale depends on the underlying premise of whether the survey designer anticipates a predominantly negative (or a positive) response and the aim is to find out how negatively or how positively respondents feel about the topic. A balanced scale typifies an open position lacking expectations on the part of the survey designer.



Working out which issues matter most to a respondent

Some researchers make the assumption that the word “strongly” shows which issues matter the most to respondents. Another possibly superior approach is to pair statements with a measure of significance. For example:

S1A The information management training I received when I started work with the Division was adequate for me to do my job effectively.

1 – Strongly disagree; 2 – Disagree; 3 – Agree; 4 - Strongly Agree

S1B Information management training is an important issue for me.

1 – Strongly disagree; 2 – Disagree; 3 – Agree; 4 - Strongly Agree

If someone judged their experience of training as a “4”, and said they expected a “3”, subtracting the expectation from the perception = +1 suggesting that they were satisfied by their training experience.

Similarly, more positive scores suggest in this case lower expectations, genuinely superior training and / or more easily satisfied respondents. Conversely, a more negative result suggests room for improvement in the training, creating better informed expectations, or both.

In a larger sample, one might expect a range of calculated difference scores on a particular issue. The meaning of results clustering around highly positive or highly negative calculated difference is clear.

Most experienced users of paired Likert style of surveys prefer a wider scale such as 1-10, to allow respondents more room to express finer shades of perception and expectation. It is important to define what each band means. For example, it is helpful to illustrate shades of meaning amongst terms like “slightly disagree”, “somewhat agree” or “neither disagree nor agree”. The meaning of these terms often becomes a subject of debate, but generally they can be thought of as shades of negative and positive response.

Looking at the responses

Response rate

Survey response rates fluctuate enormously and depend on many factors both within and outside the control of those conducting the survey. A response rate of 2% of website visitors could be considered a good result in an unprompted internet survey. A response rate of less than 90% in a face-to-face verbal survey might be considered to be poor.

Preparation for email-driven, web-based or written surveys is a key factor in boosting response rates. This might entail telephoning the target recipients and securing their co-operation in advance. Timing the survey to minimise its intrusion on respondents and keeping the survey as short as possible also contribute to better response rates. Follow-up calls may be another way to boost the response rate and research into e-mail-based surveys has shown that most survey recipients, who have not responded to a follow-up telephone call within the same business day, will never respond. A useful discussion on managing non-responders to email surveys can be found at the email labs website²

Bias

Perceptual surveys all face a common problem of the potential for bias through poor selection of the sample of respondents. This can occur through a common phenomenon where only people with an axe to grind bother to respond. Put another way, it's easier to collect complaints than it is to collect compliments. Bias is often easy to detect when respondents score all the statements at one extreme or the other, or fence-sit in the middle.

² See the References section



When a survey is anonymous, such a biased result makes the response dubious at best and more likely it is worthless. If many responses are biased in the same negative direction, the issue should be regarded as serious.

Care must be taken in designing the statements in the survey instrument to avoid building bias into the design. Common ways to avoid this are to pose some questions in the negative and to avoid a sequence of statements likely to maintain its own persuasive momentum.

Measuring central tendency and variation – the unavoidable topic - statistics

Using the Likert scale imposes the need for survey analysts to be careful with their choice of statistics for assessing central tendency and variation. Likert scale data dictate the use of non-parametric statistics. Mean or average cannot be used. Instead, central tendency can be expressed as the median or middle score (the score where half of the responses fall above and half below), or the mode (the score being chosen most often). Similarly, in expressing the variation amongst the scores, the standard deviation cannot be used. Variance is meaningfully expressed as the range of scores.

While data are often presented as counts within each category (i.e. number of respondents who chose scores in each of the bands 1 - 4 for example), they are often represented visually and reduced to percentages on bar graphs or pie charts. Avoid the temptation to compare the percentages in a category of one sample with those in the same category of another sample, particularly if the numbers of respondents are different. Five responses out of ten choosing “4” for example, do not carry the same weight of evidence as 5,000 out of 10,000.

Missing data

Missing data tell their own story too. If respondents consistently omit a response to surveys, or a particular question in a survey, it suggests that the whole survey or a specific question was either ambiguous, irrelevant or perceived as a sensitive matter or an invasion of privacy. Offering respondents a “not relevant” or a “don’t know” option helps to answer the issue of missing data, and differentiates an accidental omission from a considered deletion.

When a survey is part of a longitudinal study (several surveys over a time period), the pattern of data provided by an individual can permit an estimate of the missing data. For example, a missing data item could be guessed from the mode or median of previous scores.



Part 3: Survey Structure and Sample Survey Questions

The following description of a general survey structure is common to all the IMMF survey tools and in its entirety is most appropriately used when the survey recipient numbers are larger, for example more than 50 people or organisations. As such, the structure is most appropriately used for external surveys.

In the case of staff surveys, particularly in smaller Divisions, a less formal approach could be to discuss a single survey document at a routine staff meeting and produce a consensus view with any dissention noted accordingly. The staff should be notified in advance to foster well-considered responses.

In the context of assessing staff awareness and compliance with the ILC, some aspects may reflect a general consensus and others may depend upon individual staff members' skills, prior knowledge, experience and training. More experienced and longer-serving staff members may be in a position to offer guidance to other staff to assist them to reach a well-informed appreciation of the IM environment.

1. Covering letter (email or phone call)

The covering letter serves to introduce the survey, state to whom it is sent and its purpose. It is good practice to indicate how much time the survey is likely to take to complete (realistically measured by the designer). The letter should also inform the recipient the date by when the survey must be completed and returned. This date should allow sufficient time for follow-up of late responses and for processing the responses.

It is a good practice to state how the survey responses will be used and if the response is to be anonymous. Alternatively, providing an undertaking that responses will be kept confidential, that data will be de-identified, that only statistical information will be retained, or that paper responses will be destroyed promptly, is good practice.

2. Title and respondent's administration details or a notice ensuring anonymity

Allow the respondent to amend details and request that they need only to enter the changes, not re-enter all the information. Allow the recipient to nominate an alternative respondent if that is appropriate.

If the survey response is to be anonymous, it is important to state how this will be achieved. Particularly sensitive matters may be surveyed through a third party acceptable to staff and the CEO. The third party should summarise and de-identify data.

3. Instructions for respondents

Provide a short description of how the survey recipients are expected to respond to the questions. The scoring of Likert scale statements must be defined and it is useful to provide an example question with a response, typically a crossed or ticked box next to the preferred score (for email or web surveys) and often by circling the preferred score (for paper-based surveys).

4. Likert scale statements

Limit the number of statements to the minimum number required to establish a respondent's view on the survey topic(s). Surveys should concentrate on the core business issue(s) and the expected contributing factors. However, care must be taken to avoid using leading questions or preventing participants from offering alternative views.

5. Open questions seeking a brief written narrative or qualitative response

Open questions allow respondents to offer alternative perspectives on the survey issues and this can be valuable when the number of responses is too small to draw conclusions from the scores on the quantitative Likert scale statements. When the number of responses is large, qualitative responses to open questions can be classified and counts presented as the percentage of responses who offered a particular perspective.

The answers to open questions are difficult to process systematically and time-consuming where large numbers of responses are received. They may, however, confirm or deny the validity of preceding quantitative scored statements.



6. A request for any other comments

Allowing respondents an opportunity to raise a matter not canvassed in the survey helps to emphasise the value that is placed on their opinions and also has the potential to widen the focus of the survey to collect unanticipated information.

7. A conclusion, thanking the respondent

This section is intended to make it clear to recipients that the time and effort they have given to make a response is valued and that they are welcome to contact the survey manager or a nominated person with any questions or comments.

8. Return address details including a contact person's details

It is a good practice to provide the return address and the deadline for responses in the covering letter and on the survey itself, preferably at the end of the survey. The aim is to give the respondents sufficient cues to encourage them to complete the response and return it as soon as possible.

In addition, respondents who need assistance should be given the contact details of a person they can call or email to ask questions, seek clarification, or provide other feedback. It is incumbent on the survey manager to ensure that there is always someone available throughout the time before the survey deadline to answer questions and receive feedback. Return phone calls or email responses should be made on the same business day or the morning of next business day at the latest.

Design considerations for the survey questions.

The design considerations for survey questions are stated in the tool "Sample IM policies and standards":

IMMF Principles:

1. Accessibility
2. Usability
3. Accountability
4. Integrated Approach
5. Planned and Co-ordinated Approach
6. Optimise the Value of Information

Standards - People, Process, Technology, Culture:

1. Support for GPs for collection and utilisation of clinical data within practices
2. Improve integration and continuity of care across health and community care services
3. Planning and evaluation of health services and measuring the effectiveness of health program delivery
4. Maintaining and improving the Division's capacity for IM



Sample survey questions and statements for surveys of awareness and compliance with IM principles, policies and standards

Q1 = question 1; S1 = statement 1.

1. Awareness – open questions and Likert scale statements

Q1 Please describe what you understand by the term “Information Management Maturity Framework or IMMF”.

Q2 Can you describe the main principles that the IMMF sets out?

1. Accessibility

2. Usability

3. Accountability

4. Integrated Approach

5. Planned and Coordinated Approach

6. Optimise the Value of Information

Q3 IMMF Standards rest on four pillars. Can you name them please?

(People, Process, Technology and Culture)

S1 I rate my knowledge of policies and standards for storing information, so that it can be easily located and retrieved by others in the Division as: (Choose one option). (Testing Principle 1 – Accessibility)

- 1. Needing some refresher training
- 2. Adequate to do my job well
- 3. I assist my colleagues

Any comments about IM training?



*Q4 Which statement best describes how you see the usability of business information in the Division:
(Choose one) (testing IM Principle Usability)*

- 1. I am aware information usability as an issue, the main policies and standards and why these are important for the Division.
- 2. I am clear about how the Division's IM policies and standards impact my work.
- 3. I am well aware of the different IM needs of the Board, Divisional staff, partners and clients and I am confident that we ensure that information is timely, relevant, accurate and convenient to use..

Any comments about how information management impacts your work?

S2 The person responsible for IM within the Division is: (testing awareness of accountability)

S3 An important aspect of Information management is that we maintain an integrated approach. This means:

(testing awareness of the integration of IM regardless of the media on which information is captured and held)



S4 When our Division undertakes business and budget planning, I am aware of the need to consider IM activities that will flow from these plans.

(Choose one option)

1 – Strongly disagree; 2 – Disagree; 3 - Slightly disagree; 4 – Agree somewhat; 5 – Agree

(testing awareness of the need to co-ordinate IM activity planning with business planning)

S5 When our Division undertakes business continuity planning, I am aware of the need to consider the value of information assets and the cost of replacing information.

(Choose one option)

1 – Strongly disagree; 2 – Disagree; 3 - Slightly disagree; 4 – Agree somewhat; 5 – Agree

(testing awareness of the value of information assets)

S6 I am aware of the workflows and processes for handling clinical data in general practices.

(Choose one option)

1 – Strongly disagree; 2 – Disagree; 3 - Slightly disagree; 4 – Agree somewhat; 5 – Agree

(testing awareness of IM standard for providing support for the collection and utilisation of clinical data in general practices..... note Process, Culture and Technology pillars also offer testable questions)

S7 I am aware of the clinical pathways and data collection requirements for tracking the continuity of patient care across health and community care services.

(Choose one option)

1 – Strongly disagree; 2 – Disagree; 3 - Slightly disagree; 4 – Agree somewhat; 5 – Agree

(testing awareness of the need for and nature of improving the integration of information throughout the continuum..... note Process, Culture and Technology pillars also offer testable questions)



S8 *I understand the clinical and business drivers for change and continuous improvement within general practices and the role that IM has to play.*

(Choose one option)

1 – Strongly disagree; 2 – Disagree; 3 - Slightly disagree; 4 – Agree somewhat; 5 – Agree

(testing awareness of IM standard for planning and evaluation of health services and measuring the effectiveness of health program delivery through general practices and community health care organisations..... note Process, Culture and Technology pillars also offer useful questions particularly relating to data sets and KPIs)

S9 *I understand the key principles and practices for improving and maintaining the Division's capacity for Information management.*

(Choose one option)

1 – Strongly disagree; 2 – Disagree; 3 - Slightly disagree; 4 – Agree somewhat; 5 – Agree

(summary statement testing overall awareness of IM standards within the Division)



Compliance – Likert scale statements and an open question

Compliance with the IM policies, procedures and standards could be surveyed with Likert scale statements seeking information about:

- Divisional managers establish and apply information quality control measures to promote highly usable information for internal and external stakeholders.
- The Division regularly reviews its holdings of information and disposes material that is no longer of value.
- We seek ways of getting the most value from information we collect and hold – for the benefit of the Division and our clients.
- The Division has developed accountability structures related to IM practices. (*testing accountability*)

Perhaps the most fruitful approach is to extract questions or form Likert statements from the sample policy statements in the sample IM policies and standards tool. The numbering of the following questions and statements reflects the policy response clauses under the IMMF principles in that tool.

S1.2 I adhere to our Division's standards and procedures for staff access to information records and rules for disclosure of information.

(Choose one option)

1 – Strongly disagree; 2 – Disagree; 3 - Slightly disagree; 4 – Agree somewhat; 5 – Agree

S2.1 I believe that we routinely apply quality control measures to ensure that the information we capture, store and use meets the needs of internal and external stakeholders.

(Choose one option)

1 – Strongly disagree; 2 – Disagree; 3 - Slightly disagree; 4 – Agree somewhat; 5 – Agree

S3.3 In our Division, we have assessment procedures that evaluate our progress in implementing IM Principles.

(Choose one option)

1 – Strongly disagree; 2 – Disagree; 3 - Slightly disagree; 4 – Agree somewhat; 5 – Agree

S4.3 In our Division, we skills development programs to give staff the opportunity to acquire IM competencies

(Choose one option)

1 – Strongly disagree; 2 – Disagree; 3 - Slightly disagree; 4 – Agree somewhat; 5 – Agree

S5.3 In our Division, we have succession plans that ensure that no significant loss of key information occurs when we have staff changes

(Choose one option)

1 – Strongly disagree; 2 – Disagree; 3 - Slightly disagree; 4 – Agree somewhat; 5 – Agree

S6.2 In our Division, we have classified our records to support consistent collection and storage of information.

(Choose one option)

1 – Strongly disagree; 2 – Disagree; 3 - Slightly disagree; 4 – Agree somewhat; 5 – Agree



Measuring Compliance Directly

To measure IM compliance directly, a CEO may choose a number of actual or synthetic incoming and outgoing communications or other transaction types and check that:

1. Only appropriate information is retained.
2. Inappropriate material is dealt with according to policy and procedures.
3. Paper-based and electronic information has been captured or distributed according to the Division's IM policy and procedures.
4. Information has been stored consistently by all staff members and can be retrieved efficiently.
5. If information is distributed, privacy requirements have been adequately addressed.
6. Information is disposed in accordance with Divisional policy and the Archives Act.

A quick way to check compliance for storage of information is to send a set of different emails or paper-based messages to staff, after a short interval confirm which messages have been retained and locate where they have been filed. Efficiency of retrieval can also be tested in a similar way by requesting a copy of a previously sent email or paper communication. The nature of these test messages should reflect the predominant information-based work of the Division.

Compliance with privacy and confidentiality policy can also be tested by periodically attempting to retrieve information that should have restricted access.



Part 4: Survey Technology

Both the American Statistical Association and the *SurveyMonkey* websites (listed in the Reference section) have precise, clear and thorough discussions of alternative choices for survey technology.

They present information about the pros and cons of survey method choices, summarised in the following table.

Survey method	Pros	Cons
Formal and informal verbal inquiries	Low cost, efficient with small groups.	More difficult to record and track information and evolving opinion than other survey methods, unsuitable for large numbers of participants.
Focus groups	Provide qualitative information, improve discovery of related issues, establish relative importance and priority amongst issues and potential solutions.	Higher cost, assumes that the people in the focus groups are highly representative of the target population, unsuitable for large numbers of participants and can be biased if not well facilitated.
Paper-based surveys	Improved access to larger samples than focus groups, allow collection of qualitative and quantitative information, suitable for respondents who lack access to electronic communications and face to face methods. Lower labour costs to conduct than face-to-face surveys and focus groups.	Demand longer timeframes for distribution and collection of surveys can be costly in stationery and postage and may be less convenient for recipients to reply and have lower response rates as a consequence.
Telephone surveys	Require less time than paper-based survey methods to conduct, inexpensive for small samples and ubiquity of telephones.	Labour intensive and costly to implement for larger samples, may experience difficulty in contacting recipients.
Email-mediated surveys	Fast distribution, low cost for large numbers of recipients.	Uncertain about the status of receipt, reading and responding of the target sample. May have high labour cost in following up non-responders and processing responses. Recipients need email addresses.
Online survey tools.	Fast distribution, low cost for large numbers of recipients and lower costs for processing responses through database, statistical and graphical reporting automation and potentially more secure than email.	Recipients need Internet access.

The online survey toolmaker *SurveyMonkey* offers free-trial usage for limited numbers of survey recipients, and by-the-month or unlimited usage for a year, at reasonable rates. The product allows for Likert scale questions and provides considerable flexibility in the way the surveys may be configured and managed and the received data processed through spreadsheets with data graphics like Microsoft Excel.



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