Content Inventory: Facilitator Manual

Service Alberta, Government of Alberta

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Content Inventory Facilitator Manual

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Purpose of Manual

This manual outlines the processes and materials involved in the Consultation/Validation Phase of the inventory process, and includes important information that will assist in preparing for, conducting, and concluding consultation meetings.

Objectives of Consultation

By the end of the consultation meetings, business area participants will:

- understand the objectives and scope of an inventory;
- understand the benefits of performing an inventory;
- be able to identify and describe the processes and content associated with their business area; and
- validate collected inventory information.

Participants

It is recommended that consultation meetings be facilitated by two inventory project team members: one team member to ask questions and facilitate group discussion, and one team member to take notes. At a minimum, it is recommended that consultation sessions include at least two participants from the business area to ensure a level of consensus—an effective inventory does not reflect a single individual's perspective.

Consultation Materials

Review the materials listed below in anticipation of the consultation meetings. It is recommended that, where possible, existing communications templates and plans are leveraged to ensure that relevant material is made available to participants prior to the consultation meetings.

Facilitator Materials

- Facilitation Manual
  - Facilitators should read this document in its entirety prior to consultation.
- Communication Plan

- Should include email templates for:
  - introductory contact with business areas;
  - solicitation of business area staff for consultations;
  - validation of information collected during preliminary research phase; and
  - invitation to consultation meetings.
- Should include prepared meeting packages (e.g., meeting agendas, list of consultation questions, links to partially populated inventory for validation purposes, etc.).
- Consultation Questions
- A template for collecting notes during consultation meetings
  - This template should be formatted to capture responses to the consultation questions that can be used to populate the inventory.
  - In addition to capturing responses to populate the inventory, this template should capture:
    - department (i.e., ministry);
    - business area;
    - participating business area staff; and
    - facilitators.
  - The copies of the template used during the consultation meetings may be physical (e.g., a print out) or digital (e.g., a Word document).
    - Any information or notes collected on a physical medium must be converted to a digital medium, but this may occur after a consultation meeting (e.g., typing notes into a spreadsheet, etc.).
- Laptop or mobile device (e.g., a tablet) for quickly capturing information and/or leveraging meeting room equipment (e.g., projectors, etc.).
- Flipchart and markers (especially if the room in which the consultation occurs lacks a whiteboard).

Participant Materials

- Copy of the meeting agenda
- Copy of the consultation questions (received in advance of the consultation session)

Before Consultation Meetings

1. Perform Background Research

After a business area has been identified for participation in an inventory, leverage available background information about the area (e.g., legislative reviews, Queen's Printer, etc.) for research. If possible, conduct initial inquiries with existing department and/or IMT sector contacts to acquire additional background information (e.g., procedures, process maps).

It may be possible to identify the business area's mandate and processes through information obtained by background research—populate the inventory accordingly.

2. Identify Participants and Request Background Information

Send a request to the business area manager/supervisor asking them to:

- identify at least two staff members who will be suitable candidates for consultation; and
- share any background information they may have.

Participants may be at any organizational level, and it is important that they can represent multiple perspectives within the area. In order to answer questions and provide information, it is expected that the staff members participating in consultations are familiar with business area processes. Participants may also be asked to follow up with other business area staff as required (e.g., seeking clarification regarding vital records).

When soliciting background information from a business area manager/supervisor, provide any background information that has already been collected (e.g., procedures, process maps, policies, standards, codes of practice, previous inventories, etc.). Provision of information collected during background research to the business area manager/supervisor may allow some validation to occur prior to the consultation meetings.

It is preferred that background information from business areas is provided in a digital format (e.g., links to web content, .pdfs, etc.).

3. Validate Background Information

Use any additional background information received to populate the inventory. At a minimum, identify the business area's mandate before the first meeting.

Ensure that those validating the inventory (i.e., participants, business area manager/supervisor, and IMT professionals) are able to access and edit the inventory.

Share the updated inventory with the business area participants for validation. After the information is validated, review which inventory elements require consultation; depending on the process, different elements may be prepopulated.

4. Determine the Number of Consultation Meetings Required

Based on the business area's validation of collected background information, determine the number of consultation meetings required. If sufficient background information is available, consultations may be limited to a few meetings focused on validation; however, if insufficient background information is available (or if the business area is unable to validate the collected background information), more meetings may be necessary to populate an inventory.

5. Schedule Meetings and Share Materials

Consultation meetings should be scheduled for two hours, ideally in a space with both a computer and a projector.

Invitations should be sent to the identified participants two weeks in advance of the consultation meeting date to accommodate participants' work responsibilities; allow for rescheduling as required. In order to maximize participant engagement, the meeting invitation should include the meeting agenda, a copy of the questions that will be asked during the consultation meeting, and any other material that may be necessary.

6. Prepare Meeting Materials

A list of materials is included in this manual—review and prepare as needed for the consultation meeting. Update the note-taking template by adding validated information.

Consultation Meetings

1. Introductions

Introduce the facilitators and the participants (especially if the participants are from different teams or groups within the business area).

2. Introduce the Agenda

3. Detail the Objectives of the Meeting

Use this time to explain what is in and what is out of scope for the consultation meetings. Develop a "parking lot" for out of scope concepts and ideas (e.g., addressing gaps highlighted by a populated inventory, etc.).

4. Introduce Terminology

Some of the terms used when populating an inventory (e.g., process, content, etc.) either may be unfamiliar to participants, or may have disputed definitions. Briefly define the terms and ensure that they are understood by the participants.

5. Identify Processes

Use the consultation questions to identify high-level processes. Any processes identified and validated by background research prior to consultation meetings must be added to the inventory that will be provided to participants in the consultation meetings.

It is recommended that processes are listed and roughly outlined (e.g., inputs, input providers, outputs, output recipients, etc.) on a whiteboard, flipchart, or other interactive physical medium (e.g., sticky notes placed on a wall, etc.).

6. Identify Content

Use the consultation questions and discussions of processes to identify content. If any content was identified and validated by background research prior to consultation meetings, ensure that it has been added to the inventory provided to participants during the consultation meetings.

Tips

- Keep process descriptions at a high level.
- Participants may have already validated the collected process information prior to a meeting. Showing the updated inventory will help remind participants of identified processes, and offer an opportunity for any additional feedback.
- List any identified processes on a whiteboard or flipchart before the meeting starts, so you can keep track of progress throughout the meeting.

After Consultation Meetings

1. Review Notes

Review notes made during the consultation sessions. Add the collected information to the inventory, and identify any gaps or points requiring clarification.

2. Follow Up

Share the populated inventory with participants for validation. It may be necessary to share the populated inventory with other relevant stakeholders for validation (e.g., having IMT professionals validate information relating to records retention and disposition schedules, etc.).

Once a populated inventory is thoroughly validated by participants, submit the inventory findings to the business area manager/supervisor for approval.

Update and thank the participants, business area management, and any other stakeholders as required.

Consultation Preparation Checklists

Two Weeks Prior to Consultation

Completed	Items to Complete
	Read facilitator manual, review consultation materials, facilitator notes, and note-taking template. Become familiar with inventory terms.
	Collect background information from business area.
	Use background information to populate the inventory.
	At minimum, identify the business area's mandate.
	Validate collected background information in the inventory.
	Determine the number of meetings required.
	Determine the dates and times of meetings.
	Book meeting room. Meet the participants where they are located.
	Ensure there is a projector, internet access and computer.
	Check if there is a white board and markers. If not, plan to bring a flipchart and markers to the meeting.
	Ask the relevant IMT professional if they would like to participate in the meeting.
	Send meeting invite and links to relevant materials.
	Confirm attendance by checking invitation responses.

Day of Consultation

Completed	Items to Complete
	Pack all materials:
	Flip chart and markers (if required)
	Laptop or mobile device
	Current inventory (for reference)
	Arrive at least 30 minutes early for set up.
	Ensure that technology assets (e.g., laptop, projector, etc.) are working properly.
	List previously identified and validated processes on flip chart or whiteboard.
	Load note-taking template on the laptop.
	Greet participants.
	Start on time.
	Thank participants at end of meeting and explain next steps.

Appendix 1 – Consultation Questions

This appendix serves as a list of consultation questions that will support the population of a content inventory. Questions in **bold** are key questions that should always be asked (unless the corresponding fields have been prepopulated); additional questions are intended as prompts and/or follow-up questions. If an inventory field is populated due to work done during the Background Research Phase, the corresponding question(s) should not be asked during the consultation.

Inventory Field(s) Populated	Consultation Questions
Mandate	**What are the Acts or Regulations that mandate the business area's right to and/or obligations for collecting information?** - Are there other legal requirements (e.g., department policy, IMT Standards, etc.) that would affect and/or influence a business area's processes?
Process Name Process	**Are any of the processes unique to the business area?** - Is there anyone in your area who does something that no one else does? **What is the intended outcome (i.e., purpose) of a process?** **Does this process require input from other processes before it begins?** - From where does the input come? - What input is provided? - How the input is received (e.g., request received by email, automatically generated by a system, etc.)? **What is received and/or collected during the process?** - From where is it provided and/or collected? - Does the process alter the materials received and/or collected? - How are the necessary materials accessed? **What event or circumstance triggers this process? (definite event, routine basis, as-needed)** - What is the trigger for beginning this process? **What are the steps involved in the process?** - What event(s) or circumstance(s) triggers this process? - When is the process concluded? **When is the process concluded?** - What is needed to get and record authorization and completion?

	- Does this process ever trigger another process? **What are the different ways that the process could conclude?** **Does this process produce an output that is required by other processes?** - If so, what is the output? Does the process involve more than one business unit, organization or jurisdiction? - If so, how does the process involve other business units, organizations or jurisdictions?
Content	**What content is created?** **What content is modified?** - How is received information modified during the process? - What other use is made of the content? **What content is transferred to other processes?** - Where is it transferred? - How is it transferred (e.g., electronically or physically)?
Controller	**Which area or individual is responsible for the content?** - Does that area or individual know they have primary responsibility for this content?
Custodian	**Which area(s) or individual(s) manage this content throughout the process (besides the controller)?**
Medium	**How and where are the decisions and transactions recorded?** **Are there any tools used to track content (e.g., spreadsheets, word documents, databases, etc.)?** **Is the content affected by this process electronic or physical?** **If physical: is the content all paper, or do you have other formats (e.g., photographic film, tape, or microfilm)?** **If electronic: in what format(s) is the content (e.g., .pdf, .docx, a database)?**

Location	**Where and how is content maintained and stored (e.g., one location, multiple locations, etc.)?**
	If content is physical, does the business area have a file room or shared filing cabinet? Is any content managed in the central file room?
	What systems are used to maintain and store digital content (e.g., local drive, shared drive, SharePoint, content management system, databases, etc.)? - Are important emails ever moved out of Microsoft Outlook to a shared storage location? (Give definitions to determine "important emails")
	What databases or data storage systems do you use to maintain and store data (e.g., BLIMS, TIMS, FAMIS)?
Security Classification	**Has security classification been applied to the content?** - What security classification was applied? - Are multiple security classifications applied to the content (e.g., some reports are classified as Public, but some reports are classified as Protected B)?
Retention Schedule	**What is the records retention and disposition schedule under which the content must be managed?** **Are you aware of limitations regarding how long content must be retained and/or how it should be managed?**
Personal Information Bank	**Is any personally identifiable information associated with the content (e.g., contracts containing personnel information, etc.)?** - Has a Personal Information Bank been identified for the personally identifiable information?
Vital Records	**Is the content vital to ensuring business continuity?** **Does your area have a business continuity plan?**
N/A	Are all processes that constitute your area's function(s) identified and documented?
	Is each process accurately described?
	Is the content managed out of each process identified and documented?
	Do the descriptions and terminology used reflect organizational usage?