PART 4

Records Management Assessment

PART 4: Records Management Assessment

GETTING STARTED

After you have read the introduction and overview, you are ready to start the assessment. To help you develop your own strategy for working through the assessment, we recommend that you read through the entire assessment first and familiarize yourself with the different destinations and milestones. You can then decide which destination(s) your organization should consider first.

When you begin the actual assessment, be sure to use the assessment checklist (**Part 5**) to track your decisions for each destination and milestone. You may want to refer periodically to the overview map (**Part 2**), for a snapshot of all the destinations and milestones.

No matter which milestone you address, the actions you take to determine your level of progress and develop new or different processes will generally follow the same pattern:

- First, you need to **research** your organization's status for that milestone: does the organization perform this action or is this an area that needs to be developed from the beginning?
- You should also **study** the activities of comparable organizations, within or outside your jurisdiction, to assess different ways of approaching the same milestone.
- You will want to **consult** with both staff and senior managers, to solicit their input as you plan a way forward and to raise awareness of the milestone in question.
- You can then begin to **develop a plan** of action, which may include a business case, a strategic plan, or a project plan – ideally, the strategic plan you are urged to develop (as part of **Destination 2, Milestone 1**) will incorporate actions for most, if not all, of the other milestones.
- You will then **do the work** required to move your level of progress on that milestone as far as possible toward Proactive; the actual steps will differ depending on the milestone.
- You will want to develop and deliver **training, guidance, and support** to staff so they are equipped to succeed with new or different record-making or record-keeping processes.
- You should continue to **communicate** information about your actions or decisions for this milestone – and for records management program in general – both to staff and to senior managers, to raise awareness and encourage support.
- As you progress further with the milestone, you may wish to **share the lessons learned** with colleagues and others, within your jurisdiction or elsewhere, to help others improve their records management programs and services as you have done.

As you begin, remember to build a team, document your research, track your findings, and save the outputs you generate, such as reports, policies, procedures, plans, or training tools.

The evidence you create and collect – the records of your records management journey – will help you build a collection of core evidence to support strategic planning and future growth for your records management program – your own *Roadmap!*

Destination 1:
Our organization recognizes the value of managing records effectively

Organizations function more effectively when everyone from senior managers and decision makers to staff across all offices understand and respect the value of efficient and accountable records management. It is easier to support improvements in record-making and record-keeping processes when the purpose and benefits of best-practice records management processes are recognized.

Why do records matter, anyway? Records are evidence of actions, transactions, and decisions. Without records, governments, organizations, businesses, and even individuals are not able to find and use authentic sources of proof. Without proof, how can we verify agreements, uphold responsibilities, or prove rights? Organizations, citizens, and members of the public all need access to authentic, reliable, accessible sources of proof, whether written records or electronic data with evidential value.

Determining your organization's level of progress for each of the following milestones will help you move toward the destination of **recognizing the purpose and value of managing records effectively.**

	Milestone 1	Our organization is **aware of the value** of records management for organizational success.
	Milestone 2	**Senior managers** actively **support** records management.
	Milestone 3	Our organization links records management with **legal, regulatory, and policy requirements.**
	Milestone 4	Our organization works with **allied agencies** to support a coordinated approach to records management.

When you have finished answering the statements for each milestone, as shown on the following pages, add your answers to the tracking tool. Then you can review your answers to determine your organization's current level of progress. Are you in the danger zones of UNMANAGED or EMERGING? Or are you in the safer zones of DEFINED, MANAGED, or PROACTIVE?

You can then turn to the guidance and suggestions to see what steps you can take to improve your organization's progress and move closer to the destination.

Destination 1, Milestone 1
Our organization is aware of the value of records management for organizational success

We cannot go on a journey if our car engine does not work, the road is full of holes, or our maps are not up to date. But we cannot fix all those problems alone. We work best in teams, with drivers, mechanics, engineers, and repair crews working together to support a successful outcome.

Records management is a team effort too. If all staff in an organization create and manage their own records, without coordinating their efforts as a team, how does anyone find important evidence, especially if the person responsible is not in the office that day, or has left the post entirely?

Records management succeeds when everyone recognizes its purpose and its benefits. Success comes when the project leader saves project emails on behalf of the team; when the department manager destroys draft versions of reports according to schedule, not because her file cabinet is full; when the senior manager approves the creation of a dedicated records management staff position to help formalize and guide record-making and record-keeping practices.

An organization recognizes the value of managing records effectively when everyone

- understands the need to manage records to help the organization operate efficiently, effectively, accountably, and transparently
- supports the management of all types of records, including paper, analog, multi-media, electronic, and even databases, text messages, or social media posts
- actively participates in the effort to ensure all sources of evidence are managed appropriately, from the moment they are created to the time they can be disposed of.

To determine your level of progress for **Destination 1, Milestone 1,** ask the following questions:

- Do senior managers support records management initiatives across the organization?
- Does your organization provide staff with guidance on how to manage records and evidence?
- Does your organization have a formal records management program?
- Has your organization created a dedicated and funded records management position?
- If so, does that staff member have not only the responsibility but also the authority and resources to establish and maintain records management operations across the agency?

Think about these questions as you determine which statement best reflects your organization's current level of progress. You may wish to review relevant resources in **Part 7** first.

WHAT IS OUR ORGANIZATION'S LEVEL OF PROGRESS?

Which statement is most applicable to our organization?	**Levels of Progress**
Our organization is unaware of records management and/or has taken no steps to address records management to support the organization's tasks and priorities.	UNMANAGED
Our organization is aware of records management in general but has taken no specific action to incorporate records management into operations to support the organization's tasks and priorities.	EMERGING
Our organization is planning or pursuing records management initiatives but has not established a formal, coordinated records management program.	DEFINED
Our organization has implemented specific records management operations to support the organization's tasks and priorities, and these operations are maintained consistently.	MANAGED
Our organization has dedicated staff time and other resources to design and maintain a records management program to support the organization's tasks and priorities, and we oversee and monitor that records management program in order to identify key changes or new strategic directions.	PROACTIVE
This level is not applicable here. All organizations will benefit from recognizing the importance of records management for organizational success, which will ideally lead to the development of a sustainable records management program.	NOT RELEVANT

To support this milestone, your **team** should be as broad and diverse as possible. Everyone in the organization needs to work together to ensure records management is acknowledged as a key part of organizational success. Participants in planning for this milestone might include legal advisors, policy makers, decision makers, and staff responsible for planning and/or implementing tasks and programs across the organization that affect the creation, management, and use of records and evidence.

WHAT ACTIONS CAN OUR ORGANIZATION TAKE?

UNMANAGED EMERGING	➢ Compile and review examples of records management awareness resources, such as those found on the websites of archival institutions or professional associations, to help plan your own records management program. ➢ Draw on those resources to develop awareness raising tools for your organization. ➢ Contact your national or state records and archives institution or allied institution for advice on how to promote records management in your organization. ➢ Join relevant records and archives management associations or subscribe to publications, so you can benefit from resources and opportunities to expand your understanding of records management.
DEFINED	➢ Assign selected staff to participate in records management planning, to start building a records management team who can play a central role in developing or expanding your organization's records management program. (These team members may evolve into permanent records officers over time, ideally working in close cooperation with a qualified records manager, discussed in **Destination 3.**) ➢ Encourage your records management team members to participate in professional conferences or events, to broaden their understanding of records management. ➢ Invite records management professionals to the organization to deliver awareness raising sessions on aspects of records management and ensure your records management team members are included to support their professional growth.
MANAGED	➢ Host records and archives awareness events to promote records management. ➢ Formally recognize records management achievements across the organization. ➢ Ask records management team members to develop and deliver awareness raising sessions for staff on aspects of records management. ➢ Develop and deliver briefing notes and orientations ("elevator speeches") to brief key members of the organization on high-priority records management issues.
PROACTIVE	➢ Deliver orientations more broadly across the organization, especially when orienting new staff or retraining staff when duties or responsibilities change. ➢ Develop background information and awareness raising resources on specific records management issues, to help staff access relevant guidance and advice ➢ Pursue awareness raising or training opportunities outside of your organization, such as delivering conference presentations, participating in committee work, or sharing training resources, to support awareness raising outside your organization and expand your records management network.

Outputs might include awareness raising and orientation materials, presentation materials, briefing notes, and orientations (such as "elevator speeches").

Destination 1, Milestone 2
Senior managers actively support records management

When we travel by ourselves, we can go wherever we want – within reason. But we do not always have the capacity or resources to get far without help. We need support to help us along the way, from petrol stations to repair shops to highway maintenance crews.

Records management programs need support too. No single individual can decide to establish a records management program for the organization by themselves. A lone staff member cannot purchase new records management equipment, or reorganize record-keeping systems, or decide which records are official and which are not, without authority from appropriate superiors. Senior managers need to assign that authority and then support the initiative. Senior managers have the power to decide whether, when, and how to allocate funds, change processes, or implement programs and services. Senior managers can keep programs from expanding, or they can be champions of change.

What are the benefits of senior management support?

- Senior managers understand the broader needs and priorities of the organization; they will actively support change once they recognize the links between formalized records management and accountable, transparent operations.
- Senior managers are decision makers: their support is essential to ensuring they commit adequate funding and staffing for effective records management.
- Senior managers can support improvements in electronic records management when they understand the close relationship between evidence and information technologies.
- Senior managers who understand the value of records and evidence can help transform the organization's culture by supporting new and different approaches to record making and record keeping.

To determine your level of progress for **Destination 1, Milestone2,** ask the following questions:

- Do senior managers recognize the role and value of organizational records management? If not, why not?
- Do senior managers support allocating resources to develop a formal records management program? If not, why not?
- Has your organization considered new or expanded records management initiatives in the past? Why were those initiatives successful or not?
- Has your organization ever researched and developed a business case to assess the risks, costs, and benefits of records management?

Think about these questions as you determine which statement best reflects your organization's current level of progress. You may wish to review relevant resources in **Part 7** first.

WHAT IS OUR ORGANIZATION'S LEVEL OF PROGRESS?

Which statement is most applicable to our organization?	**Levels of Progress**
Our organization does not have senior management support for records management.	UNMANAGED
Our organization has some senior management support, but this support is neither consistent nor formalized.	EMERGING
Our organization has senior management support for records management, but this support has not yet translated into the creation of a formal records management program.	DEFINED
Our organization has senior management support for records management, which includes support for planning, implementing, and sustaining a formal records management program; however, the program is not yet operational or is in the early stages of development.	MANAGED
Our organization has consistent and formal senior management support, which has resulted in the establishment and implementation of a formal, policy-based records management program.	PROACTIVE
This level is not applicable here. All organizations are advised to secure consistent and committed senior management support for a formal and sustainable records management program.	NOT RELEVANT

To support this milestone, your **team** should include decision makers and influencers across the organization, especially senior managers who can help increase organizational support for records management once they become aware of issues related to managing records and evidence to support accountability and transparency. Periodic meetings with key decision makers across the organization will help raise their awareness of the importance of records management.

WHAT ACTIONS CAN OUR ORGANIZATION TAKE?

UNMANAGED	➢ Research examples of records management issues across the organization, both positive and negative, that senior managers should know about. ➢ Document concrete examples of areas of record-making and record-keeping practice where change is needed. ➢ Prepare a written business case for improved records management, to explain the challenges the organization faces and to identify possible solutions. The business case should present a justification for considering the implementation or expansion of records management services, so that senior managers can understand not only issues and concerns but also possible solutions. ➢ Brief appropriate senior managers across the organization on records management issues, to raise awareness and solicit support. If possible, identify specific senior managers whose roles and responsibilities make them the "right" representatives to help support records management planning.
EMERGING	
DEFINED	➢ Develop and deliver an orientation for senior managers, including reviewing the business case and presenting concrete examples, to emphasize the importance of effective, accountable, and transparent records management. This orientation could be delivered at a meeting dedicated to records management planning or to participants at an annual meeting or other organization-wide event. ➢ Start to gather resources to support the development of a strategic plan (discussed in **Destination 2, Milestone 1**), and share this information with senior managers to gain their support for the formalization of records management operations.
MANAGED	➢ Meet regularly with senior managers to keep them informed of records management activities and priorities. ➢ Encourage continued senior management support for records management, including support for resources, infrastructure, equipment, technology, and staff (addressed in **Destination 3**). ➢ Ask senior managers to join staff meetings about records management so they can remain up to date with plans and developments.
PROACTIVE	➢ Keep senior managers regularly informed of records management initiatives, without overwhelming them with detail: the goal is to keep them engaged and aware and to encourage them to offer guidance, advice, and support. ➢ Ask senior managers to participate actively in internal or public presentations, training events, or other initiatives, with the goal of maintaining their interest in the records management and encouraging their participation in outreach, awareness raising, and information-sharing events.

Outputs might include briefing notes, presentation materials, and business cases.

Destination 1, Milestone 3
Our organization links records management with legal, regulatory, and policy requirements

Traffic laws determine how fast we can drive, whether we can turn left at an intersection, and when we can pass another car. Such laws help keep everyone moving *and* help keep everyone safe. We all need to respect those laws or else there will be confusion at best, or crisis at worst.

Governments, organizations, and public-sector entities establish other laws, regulations, and policies – to provide services efficiently, to achieve results, to protect the rights of citizens and the public. Some laws and regulations restrict who is permitted to see personal information. Other laws require organizations to keep records for a stated number of years before they may be destroyed. Copyright and intellectual property laws govern what information may be published or disseminated without advance permission, and property laws may dictate which records must be kept permanently to demonstrate changes in land ownership over decades and centuries.

Linking records requirements with legal, regulatory, and policy requirements is essential. If records are going to serve as useful and authentic evidence of the organization's actions, transactions, and decisions, they must be created and managed in keeping with the law.

Recognizing the relationship between records management and legal or regulatory requirements means

- researching all laws, regulations, policies, or other requirements across the organization that influence whether and how records are made, used, and kept
- ensuring the organization creates and manages records in accordance with those requirements
- formally documenting the relationship between records and regulations, to support compliance
- defining records management terms and concepts fully and clearly in legislative, regulatory, or policy tools, so that terms are used consistently across the organization
- updating terminology in legislative, regulatory, or policy tools whenever necessary, especially when legal requirements or organizational responsibilities change.

To determine your level of progress for **Destination 1, Milestone 3,** ask the following questions:

- Has your organization documented records management requirements in relation to laws, regulations, or policies, and are those requirements reviewed and updated regularly?
- Has your organization analyzed the terms used to define records in legislative, regulatory, or policy tools, to ensure the usage is consistent across the organization?
- Has your organization implemented processes for ensuring records are created, managed, and protected to support legal, regulatory, or policy requirements?

Think about these questions as you determine which statement best reflects your organization's current level of progress. You may wish to review relevant resources in **Part 7** first.

WHAT IS OUR ORGANIZATION'S LEVEL OF PROGRESS?

Which statement is most applicable to our organization?	**Levels of Progress**
Our organization has not researched or documented any relationship between records and legal, regulatory, or policy requirements.	UNMANAGED
Our organization has recognized that there is a relationship between records and the organization's legal, regulatory, or policy requirements but has taken no specific action to link the two, either in records management activities or processes associated with adhering to legislation or regulations.	EMERGING
Our organization is planning initiatives to link records with legal, regulatory, or policy requirements, but action has not been conducted consistently across the organization.	DEFINED
Our organization has implemented specific actions to ensure that records management operations are linked with legal, regulatory, or policy requirements.	MANAGED
Our organization has a formal commitment to supporting the relationship between records and the organization's legal, regulatory, or policy requirements, and we have adopted strategic actions to ensure that records are managed to support legislation, regulations, and policies.	PROACTIVE
This level is not applicable here. All organizations are advised to link records with their organization's legal, regulatory, or policy requirements so that they can ensure their records management programme meets all legislative or regulatory needs.	NOT RELEVANT

To support this milestone, your **team** could include policy makers and legal advisors involved with administering laws, regulations, and policies across the organization. You may also wish to involve officials with a background in the law to analyze existing laws and regulations and identify explicit or implicit requirements for making or keeping records and evidence.

WHAT ACTIONS CAN OUR ORGANIZATION TAKE?

UNMANAGED EMERGING	➢ Identify all laws, regulations, and policies across the organization that incorporate requirements for record making or record keeping, both explicit and implicit. ➢ Bring together this research into a consolidated list of laws, regulations, and policies, with specific reference to records management implications. This tool will be useful for records management planning. ➢ Review all records-related terms used in legislation, regulations, and policies. For instance, look for all uses of terms such as "records," "information," "data," "archives," and other evidence-related concepts. ➢ Bring together this research into a consolidated list of terms and their use. This tool will be useful for updating legislative or regulatory instruments so that they reflect records and evidence requirements more precisely.
DEFINED	➢ Work with officials in the organization to identify processes for updating legislative and regulatory instruments to ensure terminology is used consistently and instruments are updated to reflect requirements for making or keeping records. ➢ Develop policies, procedures, and processes to ensure records are created and kept in compliance with existing legislative and regulatory requirements, and update those policies, procedures, and processes whenever legislation or regulations change.
MANAGED	➢ Develop and deliver information sessions across your organization to raise awareness about your actions to integrate records terminology and records management requirements with legal, regulatory, or policy requirements. ➢ Brief senior officials on efforts to link records management requirements with legislative, regulatory, and policy requirements, to raise awareness. ➢ Develop and disseminate guidance materials to help officials across the organization understand how they can ensure records management programs and services support legislative, regulatory, and policy requirements.
PROACTIVE	➢ Pursue outreach opportunities to share your knowledge of and experiences with the task of linking records management requirements and legislative, regulatory, and policy requirements: the goal would be to support awareness raising and information sharing beyond your organization.

Outputs might include a list of all laws, regulations, and policies that include record-making or record-keeping obligations; a list of laws, regulations, and policies that use the terms "records," "information," "data," "archives," and other record-making and record-keeping concepts; lists of records that should be created and kept to comply with legal, regulatory, and policy requirements; awareness raising and orientation materials; and presentation materials.

Destination 1, Milestone 4
Our organization works with allied agencies to support a coordinated approach to records management

A journey is much nicer – and often faster – if we travel together. Records management programs are stronger when organizations work with allied agencies that provide records-related services, such as archives management, access and privacy administration, and information security management. (Information technology management is discussed as part of **Destination 4.**)

> An **archival institution,** such as a national, state, city, business, or community archival administration, exists to acquire, preserve, and make available the documentary evidence of governments, organizations, associations, groups, and individuals within society. Archival institutions, normally formally established by law, are the "keepers of proof" for their society.
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> An **access and privacy office,** sometimes also known as an Information Commissioner's office or a Freedom of Information or Privacy office, exists to develop, coordinate, and implement policies, procedures, and systems to make the organization's information, including records, publicly available, while protecting the privacy of individuals identified in those records. Access and privacy requirements are usually guided by laws and regulations.
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> An **information security agency** protects a government's or public-sector organization's sensitive or confidential records and data in order reduce the risk of inappropriate disclosure. Records related to military operations or international trade, for instance, are often governed by information security requirements.

Strong partnerships between such agencies help organizations: enforce access and privacy rights; uphold information security requirements; and protect and preserve records with enduring value. Alliances can also help reduce overlaps or gaps in services, increasing efficiency.

To determine your level of progress for **Destination 1, Milestone 4,** ask the following questions:

- Has your organization identified any agencies in your jurisdiction responsible for archives management; access and privacy administration; or information security management?
- Has your organization established contact with those agencies to discuss records management issues and requirements?
- Has your organization established a relationship with those agencies to support records and evidence management?

Think about these questions as you determine which statement best reflects your organization's current level of progress. You may wish to review relevant resources in **Part 7** first.

WHAT IS OUR ORGANIZATION'S LEVEL OF PROGRESS?

Which statement is most applicable to our organization?	**Levels of Progress**
Our organization is not aware of the existence or role of allied agencies such as a national or state archival administrations or access, privacy, or information security offices.	UNMANAGED
Our organization is aware of relevant agencies but has not communicated with them about possible support, coordination, or partnership.	EMERGING
Our organization is in communications with relevant agencies to support and coordinate records management, archival, and access, privacy, and security needs and priorities, but no formal actions have taken place.	DEFINED
Our organization has worked with relevant agencies to implement specific actions to support and coordinate records management, archival, and access, privacy, and security needs and priorities.	MANAGED
Our organization has a formal and ongoing partnership with relevant agencies to support and coordinate records management, archival, and access, privacy, and security needs and priorities.	PROACTIVE
"Not relevant" could be applicable if your organization is entirely independent, or if the agencies discussed here do not exist in your jurisdiction. In that case, your organization may need to establish its own archival, access, privacy, or security services, or it may need to identify another entity within the jurisdiction to assist with efforts to protect records and evidence.	NOT RELEVANT

To support this milestone, your **team** could include staff within the organization who oversee decisions about identifying or managing archives; administering access or privacy requirements; or upholding security requirements. Your team could also benefit from inputs from representatives of allied agencies, who would advise on their services and help determine the nature and scope of any relationships you might establish.

WHAT ACTIONS CAN OUR ORGANIZATION TAKE?

UNMANAGED EMERGING	➢ Research activities records management, access, privacy, archival, or information security operations in other jurisdictions, to collect comparative information to help identify issues and priorities for your organization. ➢ Identify allied agencies in your government or organization who address archival, access, privacy, or security requirement, and gather information about their roles, responsibilities, and services. ➢ Meet with representatives of these agencies to outline your current records management status and discuss ways to share information and collaborate.
DEFINED	➢ Organize one or more planning sessions with allied agencies, to consider ways in which you can work together more formally. ➢ Seek senior management support within your organization to formalize or expand relationships with these agencies.
MANAGED	➢ Develop a formal plan to work collaboratively with these agencies, to coordinate your records management program with their operations. ➢ Consider developing a cross-institutional standing committee or working group to meet periodically to share information about current activities and concerns, to support communication and collaboration.
PROACTIVE	➢ Produce and disseminate information highlighting the relationship between your records management program and services and the work performed by these agencies. Share this information with senior managers and staff across the organization, to raise awareness of collaboration and initiatives. ➢ Pursue collaborative initiatives with these agencies to increase cooperation.
NOT RELEVANT	➢ Contact the agency in your jurisdiction that has authority over records and evidence, such as the Supreme Court or similar agency responsible for upholding laws and justice, to identify legal and regulatory requirements. ➢ Contact appropriate agencies in other jurisdictions to identify examples of best-practice approaches to archives, access and privacy, or information security. ➢ Plan a strategic approach to increasing your organization's capacity based on your understanding of legal and regulatory requirements and options.

Outputs might include communications with allied agencies; project proposals and plans; formal or information agreements; awareness raising and orientation materials; and presentation materials. If your organization is going to these services itself, you will need strategic and project plans, policies and procedures, awareness and orientation materials, presentation materials, and other outputs.

Destination 2: Our organization's records management program is managed strategically

Organizations benefit from implementing a records management program that is strategically planned, guided by formal policies, and supported by procedures and guidelines. Organizations also benefit from defining staff responsibilities for records management and from conducting regular reviews and audits to ensure the program remains effective, efficient, accountable, and transparent.

No complex organization can operate effectively if it does not have an overarching vision of its goals and objectives. How does an organization know how to manage records and evidence if it does not know how – and why – it wants to capture and access that evidence in the future? Strategic planning helps translate a vision into achievable outcomes.

Policies and procedures help staff understand *how* to do their jobs well. Incorporating records management responsibilities into staff job descriptions confirms everyone's responsibilities and authority to complete records management tasks. By monitoring and auditing records management operations, the organization can track its progress over time. At some point, the results of monitoring and auditing may suggest that change is needed. This is invaluable information, which will help the organization plan a new future and then update its strategic plan. And the cycle begins again!

Determining your organization's level of progress for each of the following milestones will help you move toward the destination of establishing a **strategically managed records management program.**

	Milestone 1	Our organization has a **strategic plan** for records management.
	Milestone 2	Our organization follows formal records management **policies and procedures**.
	Milestone 3	Our organization confirms records management **responsibilities of all staff**.
	Milestone 4	Our organization **monitors** and **audits** records management programs and services.

When you have finished answering the statements for each milestone, as shown on the following pages, add your answers to the tracking tool. Then you can review your answers to determine your organization's current level of progress. Are you in the danger zones of UNMANAGED or EMERGING? Or are you in the safer zones of DEFINED, MANAGED, or PROACTIVE?

You can then turn to the guidance and suggestions to see what steps you can take to improve your organization's progress and move closer to the destination.

Destination 2, Milestone 1
Our organization has a strategic plan for records management

Journeys need to be planned; otherwise, we can get lost. How can know where we are going if we do not know our intended destination? Records management programs also need to be planned. What services does our organization need to provide? What evidence do the citizens and the public we serve need to be able to access? Where do we want our records management program to be next year, or five years from now, or ten years from now?

A strategic plan outlines the organization's preferred direction for a program such as records management. A strategic plan is a written policy document, which establishes a vision for the future and then maps out how that future will be reached. Establishing a strategic plan helps organizations define destinations, milestones, and indicators of progress. The milestones in this *Roadmap* are comparable to the strategic outcomes that most organizations may strive to achieve to improve their records management operations.

An effective strategic plan usually includes: a mission statement and articulation of values for the organization; an assessment of the current status – the environment – of the organization; and a description of both long-term goals – what should change over the next five or ten years? – and short-term objectives – what needs to be done this year or next year to support change?

A strategic plan is a visionary document. But it is also a practical tool. It helps the organization achieve important changes in a planned and structured fashion. A good strategic plan helps everyone work together to achieve their shared vision.

To determine your level of progress for **Destination 2, Milestone 1,** ask the following questions:

- Has your organization ever developed a strategic vision for records management?
- Can you build on that vision to establish a new strategic plan or do you need to define a new vision?
- Have you, or can you, incorporate your organization's legal, regulatory, or policy requirements into the strategic plan, to ensure records management responsibilities are clearly articulated?
- Can you dedicate the time and resources needed to implement the strategic plan so that it will be successful? If not, how can you implement the plan, so it is useful?
- Have you established a process for reviewing your strategic vision and revising your strategic plan, perhaps every 3-5 years, to ensure it remains relevant and useful?

Think about these questions as you determine which statement best reflects your organization's current level of progress. You may wish to review relevant resources in **Part 7** first.

WHAT IS OUR ORGANIZATION'S LEVEL OF PROGRESS?

Which statement is most applicable to our organization?	**Levels of Progress**
Our organization has no formal strategic vision for records management.	UNMANAGED
Our organization is aware of the need for a strategic vision for records management but has taken no specific action to develop a formal statement or strategic plan.	EMERGING
Our organization is planning or pursuing the development of a formal strategic plan for records management but has not completed or implemented such a plan yet.	DEFINED
Our organization has developed and implemented a strategic plan for records management but has not reviewed it recently.	MANAGED
Our organization has dedicated staff time and other resources to implement, maintain, review, and update its records management strategic plan in a consistent and sustainable manner.	PROACTIVE
This level is not applicable here. All organizations are advised to formalize and document a strategic vision and use that vision as the basis for a written strategic plan for records management, which should then be reviewed and updated regularly.	NOT RELEVANT

To support this milestone, your **team** could include staff responsible for strategic planning for the organization. You may also include representatives of units that have succeeded with strategic planning in their own areas of business, even if that is not related to records management; these representatives may be able to offer useful insights into their own experiences with the strategic planning process. Some organizations engage the services of records management consultants to help develop a strategic plan, because the consultants can offer a fresh perspective on the status and potential future direction of records management for the organization.

WHAT ACTIONS CAN OUR ORGANIZATION TAKE?

UNMANAGED	➢ Establish a team, including the members of your existing records management team, to research the current state of records management for the organization. Your findings will result in an environmental scan or assessment of current conditions, which you can incorporate into your strategic plan. ➢ Bring together key representatives of your organization, from senior managers to line staff, to identify records management issues and challenges. Incorporate their input into your environmental scan. ➢ Collect examples of records management strategic plans from comparable organizations and review them for useful examples or ideas. ➢ Draw on these different internal and external inputs and research to prepare an environmental scan outlining the current state of records management in your organization and identifying strengths, weaknesses, gaps, and risks.
EMERGING	
DEFINED	➢ Establish a project framework and time frame to develop a formal strategic plan. ➢ Seek senior management support for the development of the plan. ➢ Draft a strategic vision and recommended actions and review these drafts those with appropriate representatives and senior managers across the organization. ➢ Meet regularly with these representatives to discuss records management issues and priorities and confirm priorities for developing your strategic plan. ➢ Finalize a strategic plan and seek senior management approval for the plan. ➢ Once the plan is approved, implement it according to the time frames identified.
MANAGED	➢ Monitor progress in achieving milestones and deadlines in the strategic plan. ➢ Update staff and senior managers regularly on progress with the strategic plan and solicit their feedback. ➢ Document progress with implementation, as well as staff/management feedback. ➢ Adjust expectations, deadlines, and priorities as needed to ensure your organization keeps moving forward in keeping with your strategic vision.
PROACTIVE	➢ Share your strategic planning experiences with senior managers to raise their awareness of the process and any consequence issues or challenges. ➢ Share your experiences with colleagues from other agencies, to foster information sharing and collaboration. ➢ Research changes in records management priorities, such as artificial intelligence or “work from home” requirements, to incorporate into new or revised plans.

Outputs might include an environmental scan or assessment of current conditions; draft and final strategic plans; project planning documents and progress reports; and awareness raising and orientation materials to support communications about the strategic plan.

Destination 2, Milestone 2
Our organization follows formal records management policies and procedures

A journey needs a destination – which is why a strategic plan is so important. But everyone on the journey also needs to follow established "rules of the road." How do we know which is the correct side of the road to drive on? How can we know not to drive at 120 km/hour in a 50 km/hour zone? We do not decide for ourselves; we agree to rules to keep everyone safe.

Records management policies and procedures are "rules for the road" for the creation and care of records and evidence. They help everyone in the organization create, manage, share, and store records and other sources of evidence safely, so that those sources remain authentic and reliable for as long as they are needed by the organization or the public – whether today or a century from now.

The most effective policies and procedures are based on best-practice standards. Transportation and engineering standards provide the factual basis for knowing when it is safe to drive at 120 km/hour or 50 km/hour, how many passengers can safely ride on a bus, or how strong a bridge needs to be to allow cars and trucks and buses to cross safely. Similarly, records management standards provide a basis for managing records as evidence. When those standards are incorporated into policies and procedures, we can know, for example, when do records need to be created and why; what descriptive information (metadata) needs to be captured to ensure records can be located easily; and why storing records in a secure physical environment is so important.

Organizations need to research best-practice standards and then convert the guidance into policies and procedures, which can address such topics as: what titles to assign to documents, which records are transitory and can be destroyed right away and which must be kept longer, which emails need to be kept and how, and how long should drafts be kept after a document is finalized? (Other policy instruments include classification schemes, retention schedules, and disposal authorities, which are described as part of **Destination 5.**)

To determine your level of progress for **Destination 2, Milestone 2,** ask the following questions:

- Does your organization know about, and make use of, international or national records management standards?
- Has your organization developed any policies or procedures to support records management?
- Are those policies and procedures based on best-practice standards and guidelines?
- Are these policies and procedures used consistently across the organization?
- Are the policies and procedures updated regularly, and are staff trained in their use?

Think about these questions as you determine which statement best reflects your organization's current level of progress. You may wish to review relevant resources in **Part 7** first.

WHAT IS OUR ORGANIZATION'S LEVEL OF PROGRESS?

Which statement is most applicable to our organization?	Levels of Progress
Our organization does not have any policies or procedures in place to support records management.	UNMANAGED
Our organization has established basic guidance to support records management but applies that guidance only sporadically, and we have not formalized this guidance in approved policies or procedures.	EMERGING
Our organization is planning to develop records management policies and procedures but has not yet acted, or we have implemented specific policies and procedures, but we have not addressed policy development consistently.	DEFINED
Our organization has developed written standards-based records management policies and procedures and we are implementing them in a planned and coordinated manner, but this work is not yet completed.	MANAGED
Our organization has dedicated staff time and resources to developing, implementing, and maintaining a coordinated suite of formalized, written policies and procedures to support records management.	PROACTIVE
Not applicable – all organizations are advised to establish and implement formal, written records management policies and procedures, based on best-practice standards. All organizations are encouraged to maintain and update policies and procedures regularly.	NOT RELEVANT

To support this milestone, your **team** could include representatives of units that have succeeded with policy development in their own areas of business, even if that is not related to records management; they may be able to offer useful insights into their own experiences. Some organizations engage the services of records management consultants to help develop policies and procedures. However, it is also important to involve decision makers responsible for approving records management initiatives, so they can understand and support the implementation of policies and procedures.

WHAT ACTIONS CAN OUR ORGANIZATION TAKE?

UNMANAGED	➢ Collect examples of records management policies and procedures from comparable organizations and review them for useful examples or ideas. ➢ Identify and review international and national or state-level standards to understand best-practice requirements for records management. ➢ Draw on research you completed for strategic planning to identify records management issues that could be supported by policies and procedures. ➢ Review this *Roadmap* for suggestions of top priorities for policies and procedures: many of the milestones in this tool are most effective when supported by formal policy instruments. ➢ Draw on these different inputs to prepare a list of ideal policies and procedures and then determine priorities for action.
EMERGING	
DEFINED	➢ Establish a project framework and time frame to develop or strengthen policies and procedures. ➢ Seek senior management support to support policy development, including support for the purchase of best-practice standards as needed. ➢ Start drafting or revising policies and procedures. ➢ Meet regularly with team members and other representatives to review drafts. ➢ Establish guidelines, training resources, and support tools to help staff implement and adopt policies and procedures effectively and efficiently.
MANAGED	➢ Monitor progress in the use of policies and procedures, including meeting regularly with staff to identify and address challenges or questions. ➢ Establish a formal process for reviewing and revising policies and procedures, so they always remain current and useful. ➢ Expand guidelines and training resources as needed.
PROACTIVE	➢ Expand policies and procedures as needed to address any new or changed organizational priorities or information technologies, to ensure records management requirements always match current work practices. ➢ Share your experiences with senior managers, to keep them advised of current records management practices and maintain their support. ➢ Share your experiences with colleagues from other agencies to foster information sharing and collaboration.

Outputs might include a list of key standards; lists of ideal and actual policies and procedures developed; project planning documents; final records management policies and procedures; and guidelines, orientation, awareness raising, and training materials to support the adoption and use of policies and procedures.

Destination 2, Milestone 3
Our organization confirms records management responsibilities of all staff

Not everyone needs to know how to build or repair the engine of our car. But we all should know how to drive our own vehicle safely, whether it is a car, a motor scooter, or a bicycle. Similarly, not everyone in an organization needs to understand records management concepts or principles in great depth. But everyone should know how to manage the records on their desk or in their computer effectively, so that those records and sources of evidence remain authentic, reliable, accessible, and safe.

Ideally, all staff will have the time, resources, and recognition needed to incorporate records management responsibilities into their daily work. In some organizations, for example, decision makers have confirmed that staff are allowed – indeed, required – to spend a few hours each week on records management tasks, such as: cleaning up drafts and obsolete records from their computers; filing paper records in folders and file cabinets so the desk is clear; or adding metadata to electronic records so they are stored correctly in the computer. Some staff in a unit may be assigned more specific responsibilities: they may serve as the unit's "records management liaison," with responsibility for supporting other staff with daily records management tasks. These staff members need more detailed training and both the authority and responsibility to complete assigned records management tasks.

In the ideal world, the organization will also employ at least one qualified records manager, if not an entire team. This individual or team will be responsible for planning and managing the records program, including developing policies and procedures, designing records management systems, training staff, and assisting liaisons. (Employing a records manager is discussed in **Destination 3.**)

If an organization supports all staff with records management tasks, the organization will operate more efficiently. Employees want to do their work accurately and well, and they want to manage the evidence of their work appropriately. Formally acknowledging the value of records gives them "permission" to do this work to the best of their ability.

To determine your level of progress for **Destination 2, Milestone 3,** ask the following questions:

- Does your organization formally recognize staff responsibilities for records management?
- Does your organization encourage or require staff to spend time on records management as part of their duties?
- Has your organization revised staff job descriptions to formalize their records management duties?
- Does your organization review and update these job descriptions as needed?

Think about these questions as you determine which statement best reflects your organization's current level of progress. You may wish to review relevant resources in **Part 7** first.

WHAT IS OUR ORGANIZATION'S LEVEL OF PROGRESS?

Which statement is most applicable to our organization?	**Levels of Progress**
Our organization does not formally recognize staff responsibilities for records management.	UNMANAGED
Our organization recognizes that staff have daily records management responsibilities, but we have not documented these responsibilities.	EMERGING
Our organization is planning to develop or revise staff job descriptions to incorporate records management duties, but we have not done so yet, or we have identified records management duties selectively, not consistently.	DEFINED
Our organization has formally incorporated records management duties in all staff job descriptions.	MANAGED
Our organization has developed and implemented a coordinated suite of staff job descriptions, we review and update these descriptions regularly, and we provide training and support so that staff can perform their records management responsibilities consistently, as part of their assigned duties.	PROACTIVE
Not applicable – all organizations are advised to incorporate records management responsibilities into staff job descriptions to ensure staff are given the time, resources, and recognition needed to fulfil their record-making and record-keeping duties consistently and effectively.	NOT RELEVANT

To support this milestone, your **team** could include staff responsible for human resources planning for the organization. You will want to seek input from representatives of units across the organization, to ensure that any records management requirements incorporated into staff duties address the actual needs and priorities of staff in different parts of the organization. Some staff may have more complex and demanding record-making and record-keeping responsibilities, while other staff may not deal with records or evidence at all as part of their daily work.

WHAT ACTIONS CAN OUR ORGANIZATION TAKE?

UNMANAGED	➢ Have staff identify their current records management duties, along with any questions or concerns, to identify record-making and record-keeping responsibilities of staff across the organization. ➢ Draw on research you completed for strategic planning and policy/procedures planning to identify records management tasks that need to be formally assigned to staff, so they can receive guidance and support for this work. (Examples might include how to name or file records, how to apply privacy or security classifications, and so on.) ➢ Review this *Roadmap* for suggestions of top priorities for day-to-day records management tasks that can be added to staff job descriptions to formalize their daily duties.
EMERGING	
DEFINED	➢ Document core records management tasks that all staff would need to perform as part of their daily work. Be sure to review this information with staff and senior managers before finalizing to solicit their input and increase their awareness of these core duties. ➢ Seek senior management support for changes in staff duties. ➢ Incorporate records management tasks, and formal recognition of staff time and resources, into job descriptions. Note: not all job descriptions will need to be updated; not every position will include records management responsibilities. ➢ Develop and deliver guidance, training, and awareness raising materials to support staff to perform their records management duties.
MANAGED	➢ Develop or expand guidance, training, and awareness raising resources as needed to ensure staff continue to perform records management tasks appropriately. ➢ Meet regularly with staff to identify and address questions or difficulties.
PROACTIVE	➢ Continue to provide training and support to staff across the organization. ➢ Monitor staff progress regularly and update support tools when needed. ➢ Review records management duties regularly, especially whenever the organization changes functions or incorporates new processes or technologies, to ensure staff are supported if their responsibilities change. ➢ Update job descriptions, training, and guidance whenever appropriate.

Outputs might include summaries of staff responsibilities and tasks for records management; revised job descriptions; awareness raising, orientation, and training materials; and reports on staff compliance, including information about challenges or issues with accomplishing records management tasks, to support staff with their responsibilities.

Destination 2, Milestone 4
Our organization monitors and audits records management programs and services

Do you have enough fuel for your journey? Is there enough water in the radiator? Are the tires full of air? You will not be able to answer those questions unless you check the fuel or water levels or the tire pressure.

We cannot know if we are succeeding with records management if we do not monitor and audit our programs. Monitoring is normally an internal activity, undertaken by the organization to assess for itself its level of compliance and performance. Auditing is normally an external process, carried out by someone outside of the organization, to ensure it is as objective as possible.

Compliance monitoring involves assessing if the organization is meeting legal or regulatory obligations or targets set by international or national standards or policies, to confirm that the records management program operates in keeping with the principles of accountability and good governance.

Performance monitoring involves determining how the organization's records management program is performing in relation to the organization's strategic plan and other goals and objectives, and to identify how the program might be changed to address changes in priorities, technologies, or operations.

Auditing, an expansion of both compliance and performance monitoring, involves inspecting the organization's operations, in this case its records management duties and functions. While the organization may request the audit, the work is normally carried out by a third party, so that the results are impartial and objective. Auditing reveals strengths and weaknesses in operations and helps to identify risks that need to be addressed, such as inadequate electronic storage systems or limited staff participation in daily records management practices.

Your organization benefits when it incorporates formal monitoring into the records management program and when it encourages external audits, which can provide insights and guidance that will help the organization continue to develop and enhance records management services effectively.

To determine your level of progress for **Destination 2, Milestone 4,** ask the following questions:

- Has your organization ever monitored records management activities, formally or informally?
- Has the monitoring addressed both compliance and performance?
- Has your organization ever conducted a formal audit of your records management program?
- Does your organization make use of the findings of monitoring or audits to revise records management programs and services?

Think about these questions as you determine which statement best reflects your organization's current level of progress. You may wish to review relevant resources in **Part 7** first.

WHAT IS OUR ORGANIZATION'S LEVEL OF PROGRESS?

Which statement is most applicable to our organization?	**Levels of Progress**
Our organization does not monitor or audit its records management program or services at all, or we do not have a records management program to assess.	UNMANAGED
Our organization monitors records management operations periodically but not consistently, and we have not participated in audits of our records management practices.	EMERGING
Our organization is planning to monitor our records management program or activities but have not yet implemented a formal monitoring program; and/or we have only participated in occasional audits of records management operations.	DEFINED
Our organization has developed and implemented a formal monitoring process, and we participate in external audits. Both monitoring and auditing are not yet carried out systematically.	MANAGED
Our organization maintains has developed and implemented a formal monitoring process and we participate in regular external audits of records management operations. We actively draw on the results to support accountability and help improve records management services.	PROACTIVE
Not applicable – all organizations are advised to monitor records management practices consistently and to participate regularly in audit activities, to ensure that the records management program remains effective, policy-driven, and adequately supported.	NOT RELEVANT

To support this milestone, your **team** could include staff responsible for monitoring or audit activities for the organization. You may also include representatives of units that have succeeded with monitoring and auditing in their own areas of business, even if that is not related to records management; these representatives may be able to offer useful insights into their own experiences with monitoring and auditing. Some organizations ask representatives of national or state archives institutions to complete external audits or reviews, to provide an objective assessment of current conditions and priorities for action.

WHAT ACTIONS CAN OUR ORGANIZATION TAKE?

UNMANAGED EMERGING	➢ Research existing monitoring and auditing initiatives across your organization to determine the nature, frequency, and scope of such initiatives; this information will help you determine whether, how, and to what extent you may be able to incorporate monitoring and auditing into your records management program. ➢ If records management operations have been reviewed in the past, locate the final reports and review that documentation to help determine priorities for any new assessments. (This information may also be valuable background as you develop a strategic plan for records management.)
DEFINED	➢ Develop a business case for the creation of a monitoring program, identifying priority issues to address in a first assessment. Be sure the planned review addresses both compliance and performance issues. ➢ Obtain senior management support for a formal monitoring exercise. ➢ Carry out a "test" review first to confirm the scope of the assessment and the methodologies used. ➢ Discuss options for external audits with senior managers, to develop a strategic approach to records management audits for the future.
MANAGED	➢ Obtain senior management support for a regular monitoring schedule and for consistent and coordinated audits. If possible, incorporate your plans into a wider audit framework for the organization to increase the likelihood that monitoring and auditing become formal and sustained activities. ➢ Document all monitoring and audit results in formal reports; this information help your organization identify strengths, weaknesses, and weaknesses in records management programs and services.
PROACTIVE	➢ Use monitoring and audit results to identify potential areas of growth or change for your records management program, especially to identify changes needed to address new or different technologies, organizational priorities, or requirements for public accountability. ➢ Revise monitoring and audit requirements to incorporate changes in records management practice, so the reviews always assess current practice. ➢ Publicly promote the results of audits (especially, but not only, your successes) to support your organization's growing role as a leader in the field of records management.

Outputs might include policies, procedures, and guidance materials to define the nature and scope of monitoring or audit activities; project planning documents and progress reports on monitoring or audit activities; final monitoring and auditing reports.

Destination 3:
Our organization commits sufficient resources to support records management

Organizations benefit from investing the resources needed to ensure records management programs are efficient, effective, accountable, and transparent. These resources include finances, physical infrastructure, equipment and technology, and staff.

Every enterprise, whether a private business or a public office, needs money to pay for goods and services. Having a dedicated budget for records management allows an organization to secure these goods and services consistently. The funds can then be used to acquire, build, and maintain physical infrastructures such as buildings, offices, storage facilities, and computer rooms. The funds also allow the organization to acquire needed equipment such as filing cabinets and photocopy machines, as well as technologies such as computers, hard drives, Internet connections, and so on. Of course, funds are also essential to hiring supporting qualified records management staff and supporting their development through continuing education and training.

Determining your organization's level of progress for each of the following milestones will help you move toward the destination of **committing sufficient resources** to support records management.

	Milestone 1	Our organization commits **adequate financial resources** for records management.
	Milestone 2	Our organization provides a secure **physical infrastructure** and acquires appropriate **equipment and technology** for records.
	Milestone 3	Our organization **engages qualified professionals** to perform records management duties.

When you have finished answering the statements for each milestone, as shown on the following pages, add your answers to the tracking tool. Then you can review your answers to determine your organization's current level of progress. Are you in the danger zones of UNMANAGED or EMERGING? Or are you in the safer zones of DEFINED, MANAGED, or PROACTIVE?

You can then turn to the guidance and suggestions to see what steps you can take to improve your organization's progress and move closer to the destination.

Destination 3, Milestone 1
Our organization commits adequate financial resources for records management

Cars and trucks and motorcycles cost money. So do the fuel and oil we need to keep them running. The mechanic who repairs our car does not work for free. We need resources not only to acquire our chosen form of transportation but also to maintain it.

Records management programs need to be adequately resourced, both to establish them and then to sustain them. A records management program is not a short-term project but a long-term service, and so it needs to be sustained throughout the life of the organization itself. Funds are required to provide for staff; buildings, offices, and storage areas; equipment, technology, and supplies; and overhead costs such as light, heat, water.

Even organizations with limited resources are wise to invest in protecting their records and evidence. The organization needs sources of proof to remain accountable and transparent. Without records and evidence, the organization cannot defend its actions and decisions. Its financial situation, and its ability to execute its responsibilities, can diminish dramatically. An organization may not be able to hire a permanent records manager, for example, but it can still protect evidence by storing paper/analog records in safe conditions or ensuring electronic records are backed up regularly. The resources needed for these tasks may not be great, but the benefits can be significant.

By providing adequate resources for records management, the organization also signals its recognition of the need for such services, demonstrating the value of records management as a core organizational responsibility.

To determine your level of progress for **Destination 3, Milestone 1,** ask the following questions:

- Does your organization allocate resources for records management?
- Are those resources allocated in a coordinated manner or only in an ad hoc fashion?
- Do senior managers actively participate in planning and allocating records management resources?
- Is there a formal budget for records management, and does it reflect current needs and priorities?
- Does that part of the organization that delivers records management programs and services decide the allocation of resources, or are decisions made by another unit? If the latter, is the unit responsible for records management operations allowed or encouraged to provide input into financial decisions?

Think about these questions as you determine which statement best reflects your organization's current level of progress. You may wish to review relevant resources in **Part 7** first.

WHAT IS OUR ORGANIZATION'S LEVEL OF PROGRESS?

Which statement is most applicable to our organization?	Levels of Progress
Our organization does not obtain or allocate resources for records management consistently. Any expenditures are ad hoc and are determined by decision makers outside of the control of those who perform records management duties.	UNMANAGED
Our organization receives resources for records management but does not have a formal budget or plan to support their use; spending decisions are based on immediate needs and urgent priorities.	EMERGING
Our organization budgets for records management but does not always receive the resources required, and the unit responsible for delivering records management services does not have control over the allocation of resources.	DEFINED
Our organization formally plans and budgets for resources for records management, and those responsible for delivering records management services have direct input into the allocation of resources. Resources are not always adequate to needs, however.	MANAGED
Our organization receives adequate resources for all areas of records management services, including financial, physical infrastructure, equipment, technology, supplies, and staff, those responsible for delivering records management services have full control over the allocation of resources.	PROACTIVE
Not applicable – all organizations are advised to secure adequate resources for records management and to ensure that those responsible for delivering records management services have a significant measure of control over their allocation.	NOT RELEVANT

To support this milestone, your **team** could include staff responsible for financial management for the organization. You may also include representatives of units that have succeeded with obtaining adequate funding for their own areas of business, even if that is not related to records management; these representatives may be able to offer useful insights into their own experiences with planning and managing budgets and securing funds.

WHAT ACTIONS CAN OUR ORGANIZATION TAKE?

UNMANAGED EMERGING	➢ Research the costs of running a records management program at different levels of capacity, from ideal to optimum, adequate, and minimum; compare those budgets with your organization's current allocations for records management and determine priorities for funding to support your own needs. ➢ Build financial plans into your business case to argue for increased spending and the commitment of dedicated funds for records management. ➢ Meet with senior managers and decision makers to review the business case, as well as a strategic plan if it has been developed, to determine financial priorities and develop a plan for financing core records management operations.
DEFINED	➢ Document all current financial expenditures consistently; use this information as the basis for planning future needs. ➢ Determine priority areas for records management services and identify the financial resources (infrastructure, equipment, technology, supplies, and staff) to achieve necessary growth. ➢ Build a business case that argues for the provision of adequate resources and for control over financial allocations for records management. ➢ Present your business case to senior managers and solicit their support for increased funding as well as financial authority and responsibility.
MANAGED	➢ Keep building new business cases or presentations to raise awareness among senior managers of the need to increase or reallocate funds for records management programs and services. ➢ Document successes with records management, as well as gaps or weaknesses, to demonstrate increasing capacity as well as need. Building a track record of success can help convince senior managers of the value of records management. ➢ Make budgets and expenditure statements fully available to appropriate senior managers, to support transparency and raise awareness of records management operations.
PROACTIVE	➢ Continue to monitor and track spending consistently. ➢ Develop and disseminate presentations and briefing materials that link effective and accountable records management with adequate resources; share this information within or outside the organization to raise awareness and solicit support. ➢ Continue to promote your success with records management operations while arguing for continues financial support for growth and expansion.

Outputs might include financial analyses and business cases; documentation of expenditures; financial tracking and monitoring records; awareness raising, orientation, and training materials, to support continued provision of adequate financial resources.

Destination 3, Milestone 2
Our organization provides a secure physical infrastructure and acquires appropriate equipment and technology for records

Storing our car in a covered, locked garage helps keep it safe, clean, and dry. Records also need to be protected. Paper/analog records need to be stored safely in file cabinets, office drawers, or storage rooms. Electronic records also need to be secure: computer servers need to be backed up regularly, office computers must be protected with anti-virus software, and access to electronic systems should be governed by formal security protocols.

Even seemingly basic decisions like where to store older paper records need to strategic. Are records placed in durable boxes or containers, to reduce damage in the event of an insect infestation? Are they stored on shelves and off the floor, to keep them dry in the event of a water leak? Are there fire extinguishers in the storage room, and are those extinguishers always charged and ready to use? Containers, shelves, and fire equipment all cost money. The organization needs access to accurate information about needs and priorities for infrastructure, equipment, and technology to make appropriate decisions about funding.

A forward-thinking organization also plans for changes in the future. Your organization may primarily use paper records today, but if the organization's vision is to increase electronic records management significantly, funds will be needed to support the acquisition and maintenance of computer hardware and software, as well as the installation of Internet connections, security systems, backup equipment, and so on. Computer software and hardware age quickly, and a wise organization plans not just for the initial purchase but also for future upgrades. Those plans need to consider critical infrastructure requirements for protecting records and evidence. (The information presented in **Destination 7** includes more detailed guidance about storage and preservation.)

To determine your level of progress for **Destination 3, Milestone 2,** ask the following questions:

- Who makes financial decisions about infrastructure, equipment, and technology?
- Does your organization allocate resources specifically for records infrastructures, equipment, and technology? Are those decisions based on best-practice requirements for records?
- Does your organization already have a secure physical infrastructure for records and evidence, including a safe physical environment for physical/analog records and adequate storage and backup systems for electronic records? If not, what changes are needed?

Think about these questions as you determine which statement best reflects your organization's current level of progress. You may wish to review relevant resources in **Part 7** first.

WHAT IS OUR ORGANIZATION'S LEVEL OF PROGRESS?

Which statement is most applicable to our organization?	**Levels of Progress**
Our organization does not control how records are managed or stored, and we do not participate in decisions about the choice of equipment or technology used to create, capture, or keep records; Our selection of physical infrastructure, equipment, and technology is ad hoc.	UNMANAGED
Our organization is aware of the need to provide a secure physical infrastructure for records and to acquire appropriate equipment and technology, but no formal action has been taken to address these needs.	EMERGING
Our organization knows where physical records are kept, whether in offices or storage rooms, and we have identified the different types of equipment and technology used to create, manage, and keep records, but we have not developed a strategic approach to decision making for the acquisition of records-related infrastructure, equipment, or technology.	DEFINED
Our organization oversees decisions about where and how records are managed and stored, whether in offices or in long-term storage locations – and we control the process of selecting which equipment and technology is used to create, store, and manage physical/analog and electronic records.	MANAGED
Our organization has a formally established records management program that includes strategic planning and oversight of the selection and use of physical infrastructures, equipment, and technology; we have the authority and the resources needed to ensure infrastructure, equipment, and technology are appropriate for records management requirements.	PROACTIVE
Not applicable – all organizations are advised to ensure their records management program gives appropriate decision makers the responsibility and authority to plan and oversee the selection and use of physical infrastructures, equipment, and technology, in order to ensure records and evidence are safe and well managed regardless of their form or medium.	NOT RELEVANT

To support this milestone, your **team** could include officials responsible for managing physical infrastructures such as buildings, offices, and storage spaces; facilities and equipment managers; and decision makers responsible for information technology. You may wish to consult with colleagues who have participated in planning records management infrastructures, equipment, or technologies, to gain insights into issues or priorities that your organization may wish to address.

WHAT ACTIONS CAN OUR ORGANIZATION TAKE?

UNMANAGED	➢ Draw on your completed records management inventory to plan your infrastructure, equipment, and technology needs. (The inventory is included in **Destination 5, Milestone 2.**) ➢ If your records management inventory does not adequately identify storage locations or equipment and technologies used to create and store records and evidence across your organization, update the inventory to incorporate this information. The inventory is a central records planning tool and should be as detailed as possible. ➢ Research best practices in storage, physical infrastructure, and equipment and technology for records management services in other jurisdictions, to provide comparative information that will help with planning.
EMERGING	
DEFINED	➢ Identify and document priorities for action to improve physical infrastructures, equipment, and technology, based on your knowledge of current conditions and your research into best practices. ➢ Discuss strategies with senior managers to identify ways to improve conditions. ➢ Incorporate strategies and priorities into your organization's records management strategic plan, to support consistent improvements in physical infrastructures, equipment, and technology.
MANAGED	➢ Regularly assess the status of your organization's physical infrastructure, equipment, and technology, and use this information to update strategic plans and adjust budget allocations as needed: the goal will be to ensure conditions remain appropriate in the future. ➢ Develop and disseminate outreach and awareness raising tools to keep senior managers engaged with the records management program and to make them aware of any need to change or increase funds for infrastructure, equipment, and technology.
PROACTIVE	➢ Work closely with senior managers to identify any new approaches or changes to records management operations, so that any new priorities for infrastructure, equipment, and technology are incorporated seamlessly into strategic plans.

Outputs might include an inventory of the location of physical/analog and electronic records and evidence and identification of records-related equipment and technology; a list of priority issues for changes in infrastructures, equipment, and technology; and awareness raising and orientation materials to support information sharing about the relationship between good records management and the selection and use of infrastructures, equipment, and technology.

Destination 3, Milestone 3
Our organization engages qualified professionals to perform records management duties

We may need to know how to build or repair our car's engine ourselves. But we do need to know that the mechanic who maintains our car knows how to do the job. Otherwise we may not be certain that our vehicle is roadworthy. And even if we cannot repair our vehicle ourselves, we need to know how to operate it safely, whether it is a car, a motor scooter, or a bicycle.

Not everyone in an organization needs to know how to perform specialized records management tasks such as classifying records, deciding how long some documents need to be kept, and confirming which records can be destroyed when they are no longer needed. That is the work of a qualified records professional or, in larger organizations, a team of professionals.

Repairing a car, building a highway, designing an office tower, and providing medical care are all services best performed by professionals. A records management program operates best when it is administered by people with expertise, training, and knowledge.

Of course, that does not mean that other officials within the organization do not have an important part to play. A mechanic may tune up our car, so it runs well, but we keep the car running in between checks by checking the oil and water and storing the care safely. A building is constructed by architects and engineers, but it is maintained by office staff, janitors, cleaners, and repair crews. The records professional designs and oversees a records management program, but everyone in the organization needs to know how to manage the records on their own desk or in their own computer, so that those records remain authentic, reliable evidence.

To determine your level of progress for **Destination 3, Milestone 3,** ask the following questions:

- Does your organization, or your nation, state, or jurisdiction, recognize the existence of records management as a formal profession?
- Are there professional associations or groups in your jurisdiction that you can contact to obtain advice about how to locate qualified records managers for your organization?
- Does your organization already have a qualified records manager, or team of qualified professionals, on staff?
- If not, who is responsible for carrying out records management tasks?
- What training, guidance, and support does your organization provide these officials to help them do their jobs?

Think about these questions as you determine which statement best reflects your organization's current level of progress. You may wish to review relevant resources in **Part 7** first.

WHAT IS OUR ORGANIZATION'S LEVEL OF PROGRESS?

Which statement is most applicable to our organization?	**Levels of Progress**
Our organization does not perceive of records management as a formal profession.	UNMANAGED
Our organization is aware of the records management profession but has never involved records managers in our operations, whether as short-term consultants or as permanent employees.	EMERGING
Our organization is considering engaging records management professionals, but no action has taken place.	DEFINED
Our organization has hired records management professionals to develop and deliver records management services.	MANAGED
Our organization has formally established a records management program and hired qualified records management staff, and those officials are given the authority and resources they need to perform records management tasks in a planned and strategic manner.	PROACTIVE
Not applicable – all organizations are advised to engage records management professionals, either as permanent staff members or as consultants or advisors, to support the development and delivery of an effective and accountable records management program. Records management is a profession, and organizations benefit from the expertise provided by qualified practitioners, even if on an advisory basis.	NOT RELEVANT

To support this milestone, your **team** could include staff responsible for human resources planning for the organization, who can advise on the addition of records management positions. You will benefit from consulting with professional associations or groups to identify the qualifications and duties of records managers, as you plan new positions or develop job descriptions. If you are unable to engage a records manager in a permanent position yet, professional associations will be able to direct you to suitable consultants who can provide short-term assistance as your records management program is established.

WHAT ACTIONS CAN OUR ORGANIZATION TAKE?

UNMANAGED EMERGING	➢ Research the level of formal recognition records management receives in your organization. ➢ If records management is not recognized as a formal profession, investigate how your organization could add records management as a valid position. ➢ Seek out national, state, or other professional associations or groups and solicit their advice about how to identify and formalize records management positions within your organization. ➢ Consider joining these associations or groups, to benefit from their guidance and resources as you develop and expand your records management program.
DEFINED	➢ Review records management responsibilities for staff (considered as part of **Destination 2, Milestone 3**), to support the development of duties and responsibilities for a dedicated records management staff member. You will want to ensure the duties of the records management officer complement and support the daily tasks of staff, and you may end up adjusting staff duties if they are better carried out by a qualified professional. ➢ Draft job descriptions for different types of records management positions for your organization, from senior records managers to support staff; use these descriptions as the basis for allocating resources and then for hiring new staff.
MANAGED	➢ Ensure the records management professionals on staff are given the resources they need to perform their duties successfully, including finances, physical infrastructure, equipment, and technology. ➢ Support continuing education for all records management professionals on staff to allow them to expand their knowledge and skills over time. ➢ Maintain professional memberships in professional associations, to allow professional staff to build a support network with colleagues within and beyond your jurisdiction; this network will support the staff member and the organization.
PROACTIVE	➢ Encourage records management staff to participate actively in professional activities, including continuing education, professional development, and conferences and seminars, to support ongoing learning and information sharing. ➢ Involve records management professionals in management decisions whenever records or evidence issues are involved, to benefit from their expertise. ➢ Encourage records management staff to develop and disseminate outreach and awareness raising information to staff, to support improved records management.

Outputs might include analysis of records management staffing requirements; new or revised job descriptions for qualified records professionals (and revised job descriptions for other staff); awareness raising, orientation, and training materials.

Destination 4:
Our organization recognizes the link between records and information technology

The technologies we use to make and keep records are always changing. At one time, we captured information on clay tablets and stored them in caves. When paper was invented, we wrote information on documents and bound them in leather-bound books or in metal chests. Today we use computers to make and store records, either in our own hard drives or in "cloud computing" systems, which are in fact hard drives managed in some other location from us.

Organizations need to establish processes for managing all records, whether they are paper, parchment, or electronic. To achieve success, organizations need to plan record making and record keeping strategically. Which technologies will be used to create and store records and evidence? How will the organization maintain and upgrade those technologies? How will it ensure the records and evidence remain safe and accessible, even if the technologies change?

Strategic planning can help the organization manage records and evidence effectively, no matter what tools are used. Selecting technologies strategically and working closely with information technology providers allows organizations to coordinate technology decisions with evidence requirements.

Determining your organization's level of progress for each of the following milestones will help you move toward the destination of **linking records management** and **information technology management**.

	Milestone 1	Our organization **manages all records and evidence** effectively, regardless of form or medium.
	Milestone 2	Our organization **selects** information technologies strategically to support records management.
	Milestone 3	Our organization **collaborates** with information technology providers to protect records and evidence.

When you have finished answering the statements for each milestone, as shown on the following pages, add your answers to the tracking tool. Then you can review your answers to determine your organization's current level of progress. Are you in the danger zones of UNMANAGED or EMERGING? Or are you in the safer zones of DEFINED, MANAGED, or PROACTIVE?

You can then turn to the guidance and suggestions to see what steps you can take to improve your organization's progress and move closer to the destination.

Destination 4, Milestone 1
Our organization manages all records and evidence effectively, regardless of form or medium

A car is one form of transportation; a bicycle is another. So is a train, a motor scooter, a bus, and our feet. They all help us get from one place to another. We choose different forms of transportation for different reasons. Making the right choice depends on knowing where we want to go and how quickly or easily we want to get there.

Reports, correspondence, memos, policies, and checklists are all types of record. Some may have been created using computer technologies, and some with pen and paper. Our choice of form of record depends on many issues: do we need proof of a "wet signature" on a contract, which means we create a paper record? Are we capturing records of staff pay, in which case a database may be most efficient?

All those records need to be protected, regardless of their form. We may store "old fashioned" paper records in filing cabinets and storage boxes, which is a relatively easy way to ensure they are safe and usable. They will not deteriorate quickly, unless they are exposed to fire or flood. , perhaps. Analog records such as cassette tapes or video recordings can be stored safely for many years, but if we do not keep the equipment needed to play them, we will not be able to access the content on the tapes. We may store electronic records on computer hard drives or tape backup systems, but we also risk not being able to access them later if we do not have the computer equipment needed to open the files.

Ensuring paper/analog and electronic records and evidence remain authentic and usable over time means not just protecting the content of the records but also the technologies needed to access and use them now and in the future. Otherwise they might become completely inaccessible.

To determine your level of progress for **Destination 4, Milestone 1,** ask the following questions:

- Does your organization create and save paper/analog records regularly and consistently?
- Have you established formal processes for capturing and preserving paper/analog records, and do you train and support staff so they can follow those processes easily?
- Does your organization create and save electronic records regularly and consistently?
- Have you established formal processes for capturing and preserving electronic records, and do you train and support staff so they can follow those processes easily?
- Does your organization provide the resources needed to maintain, upgrade, or change the technologies and equipment you use to capture and preserve records, regardless of form or medium, so that the evidence in those records remains accessible for as long as needed?

Think about these questions as you determine which statement best reflects your organization's current level of progress. You may wish to review relevant resources in **Part 7** first.

WHAT IS OUR ORGANIZATION'S LEVEL OF PROGRESS?

Which statement is most applicable to our organization?	**Levels of Progress**
Our organization has not established any processes for managing records from creation and capture to storage and access, regardless of form or medium.	UNMANAGED
Our organization is aware of the need to manage records effectively, regardless of form or medium, but our organization has not adopted consistent processes, or our organization has only established processes for managing one record form. (For example, we have processes to manage paper records *or* analog records *or* electronic records, but we do not have consistent processes to manage all forms.)	EMERGING
Our organization is planning to develop processes for managing records from creation and capture to storage and access, regardless of form or medium, but we have not completed or implemented these processes, or we have implemented them inconsistently.	DEFINED
Our organization has developed and implemented a process for managing records from creation and capture to storage and access, regardless of form or medium: all types of record created and used within our organization are governed by established processes.	MANAGED
Our organization has implemented a formal and coordinated process to manage all organizational records effectively, regardless of form or medium; we dedicate staff time and other resources to maintaining our processes for creating and caring for records in all forms or media, including adopting a strategic approach to selecting the equipment and technology we use for creating and managing records and evidence.	PROACTIVE
Not applicable – all organizations are advised to manage their records effectively, regardless of form or medium, which includes establishing formal processes for managing and using records and evidence in all forms, including paper/analog, electronic, and other forms.	NOT RELEVANT

To support this milestone, your **team** could include officials responsible for selecting and managing information technologies, as well as decision makers and senior managers who oversee compliance with laws or regulations. Understanding legal requirements for record-keeping will help your organization decide which technologies should be used and how they should be managed to ensure records and evidence remain authentic and reliable.

WHAT ACTIONS CAN OUR ORGANIZATION TAKE?

UNMANAGED	➢ Draw on your completed records management inventory to identify the different forms or media of records in existence across your organization, along with information about the equipment and technology used for record-making and record-keeping. (The inventory is included in **Destination 5, Milestone 2.**) ➢ If your records management inventory does not adequately identify record-making and record-keeping equipment and technologies, update the inventory to incorporate this information. The inventory is a central records planning tool and should be as detailed as possible. ➢ Using this information, prepare a written business case for managing and preserving records in all forms; the business case should explain both challenges and possible solutions, with a justification for the development of a strategic approach that ensures records are managed regardless of form or medium. ➢ Identify key senior managers across the organization who should participate in decisions about how to manage records in all forms.
EMERGING	
DEFINED	➢ Using the business case and briefing materials, provide an orientation for key senior managers about the need for a strategic approach to managing records in all forms and media. This orientation could be delivered at a dedicated records management session or as part of an annual meeting or other event. ➢ Once you have senior management support, develop and implement a strategic plan to support the management of records and evidence regardless of form or medium. (This plan may form part of a larger records management strategic plan.)
MANAGED	➢ Establish policies and procedures to manage records regardless of form or medium. ➢ Review your strategic plan and update it whenever new information technologies are introduced or records management needs and priorities change. ➢ Prepare progress reports as needed to assess actions and identify changing needs.
PROACTIVE	➢ Expand your plans, policies, and procedures as needed, especially when records management needs change or new technologies are introduced. ➢ Meet with senior managers regularly to discuss current activities and plan future directions for records management and information technology use. ➢ Develop and disseminate information about the organization's approach to integrating records management and information technologies, to share information and ideas as widely as possible.

Outputs might include the inventory of records and archives; a business case; briefing notes and presentation materials; strategic and project plans; project and progress reports; and awareness raising and orientation materials.

Destination 4, Milestone 2
Our organization selects information technologies strategically to support records management

A century ago, people used to start their cars by cranking a lever on the front of the engine. Today, we start our cars by turning a key attached to the steering wheel. The newest cars some equipped with a button on the dashboard which we can push to start the car. The "key" stays in our purse or pocket. Someday we may be able to start a vehicle just by thinking about it!

Records and evidence also change as the technologies we use evolve over time. We cannot predict the future. But if we remember that change is inevitable, we can adopt a strategic approach to selecting information technologies. Our goal is to ensure that the records we create and keep remain authentic and reliable forms of evidence, no matter what technologies we use. To achieve success, we need to focus on these keywords: flexibility, strategy, and support.

If information technologies are always going to change, our organization must be **flexible**. We must be able to move smoothly from one tool to another. Officials need to keep working, and the products of their work – records and evidence – need to be protected.

To address inevitable changes in information technologies, we also need to adopt a **strategic approach.** Change is inevitable, and we need to be prepared well in advance.

We also need to provide **support.** We need to support staff so that they can work effectively regardless of the technologies they use. We also need to support the technologies themselves, by maintaining them consistently and updating them regularly, so that the records and evidence produced using those technologies remain safe and accessible.

To determine your level of progress for **Destination 4, Milestone 2,** ask the following questions:

- Has your organization established a strategic process for selecting information technologies, or are decisions made in an ad hoc manner?
- Does this process address all stages of the record's life cycle, from creation and management to use, storage, preservation, and disposal?
- Is the process of selecting technologies flexible, open, and consultative? Are key parties across the organization – including those responsible for records and evidence – actively involved?
- Does your organization provide sufficient support to maintain, upgrade, and replace information technologies, so that the evidence they hold remains authentic, reliable, and accessible?

Think about these questions as you determine which statement best reflects your organization's current level of progress. You may wish to review relevant resources in **Part 7** first.

WHAT IS OUR ORGANIZATION'S LEVEL OF PROGRESS?

Which statement is most applicable to our organization?	Levels of Progress
Our organization has not established any processes for selecting information technologies. Decisions about the selection and use of technologies to create, manage, share, and store records and evidence are ad hoc only.	UNMANAGED
Our organization is aware of the need to establish processes for selecting information technologies, and we recognize the link between records management and information technology, but we have not taken formal action to manage the process.	EMERGING
Our organization is in the process of developing processes for selecting information technologies that support the effective management of records and evidence, but we have not implemented any processes yet.	DEFINED
Our organization has developed and implemented processes for selecting information technologies to support records and evidence management, but we are not able to apply these processes consistently yet.	MANAGED
Our organization has adopted a strategic approach to selecting information technologies to support records and evidence management; we monitor the use of information technologies regularly; we identify issues and concerns; and we update or change technologies or processes whenever required, with the goal of ensuring records and evidence are protected regardless of the technologies used.	PROACTIVE
Not applicable – all organizations are advised to adopt and implement a strategic approach to the selection of information technologies, and to review the use of information technologies consistently, to ensure that records and evidence are managed adequately regardless of technologies or tools.	NOT RELEVANT

To support this milestone, your **team** could include officials responsible for selecting and managing information technologies, as well as decision makers and senior managers who oversee compliance with laws or regulations. Other participants might include officials responsible for making and keeping electronic records and evidence, such as databases, websites, or other electronic forms. These officials can offer insights into concerns and priorities for ensuring the records and evidence they produce remain authentic and reliable.

WHAT ACTIONS CAN OUR ORGANIZATION TAKE?

UNMANAGED EMERGING	➢ Review your research into different forms or media of records across your organization, and research about different information technologies your organization uses, to assess current conditions and determine priorities for action. ➢ Meet with officials involved with selecting, managing, or using information technologies, from senior managers to line staff, to discuss current conditions and identify issues related to managing records and evidence. ➢ Research the practices of comparable organizations in the selection and use of information technologies; review this background information to identify issues or examples that might be useful as you plan for your organization. ➢ Consult with information technology providers associated with your organization (discussed in **Destination 4, Milestone 3**) to develop a shared approach to linking records management requirements with information technologies.
DEFINED	➢ Drawing on the business case developed for **Destination 4, Milestone 1**, provide an orientation for key senior managers about the need for a strategic approach to selecting information technologies. This orientation could be delivered at a dedicated records management session or as part of an annual meeting or other event. (Ideally, the initiatives in this milestone will be linked with others associated with this destination.) ➢ Once a formal plan is approved to support a strategic approach to selecting information technologies, work with appropriate officials across the organization to begin to implement the plan.
MANAGED	➢ Using your strategic plans as the basis for action, formalize the process for selecting information technologies and monitor its application so it remains effective and consistent. ➢ Prepare project updates and status reports and share this information regularly with senior managers and decision makers, as well as with information technology providers, to update everyone on current conditions and plan future actions. ➢ Document progress with plans so you can adjust expectations, deadlines, and priorities as needed to keep moving forward strategically.
PROACTIVE	➢ Keep researching developments in information technologies to identify potential impacts on records management, to keep the organization proactive and strategic. ➢ Meet with senior managers regularly to address new developments in information technologies and records management requirements. ➢ Revise plans and processes whenever needed to address new developments.

Outputs might include inventories of equipment and technology; strategic and project plans; project and progress reports; and awareness raising, orientation, and presentation materials.

Destination 4, Milestone 3
Our organization collaborates with information technology providers to protect records and evidence

When our primary form of transportation was our feet, it was up to us to make or purchase socks and shoes to keep our feet safe. Otherwise, we could not rely on our feet to take us from Point A to Point B. Today, we do not build cars or buses or trains ourselves. And we cannot necessarily repair them ourselves. But we are wise to ensure our vehicles, from cars to bicycles, are well maintained, even if we do not make repairs ourselves. We rely on engineers and mechanics to keep our vehicles working.

Similarly, we used to be able to create or repair information technologies ourselves: we could make our own clay tablets, and we could repair sheets of paper ourselves. Today, we acquire computers and cellular telephones from manufacturers. Our Internet connections and cellular signals are provided by commercial suppliers or governments. Few of us can make or repair electronic devices ourselves.

If we are going to protect records and evidence so they remain accessible for as long as possible, we need to develop strong relationships with the experts who select, maintain, and support information technologies. Those officials may work within our own department or unit as a dedicated team of information technology specialists. Or they may work in a separate unit within our larger organization, such as a dedicated information technology department. Or they may be external suppliers: private businesses or other agencies that support many different organizations in a particular jurisdiction.

No matter where we get support, the reality is that very few of us, as individuals or organizations, have the skills or capacity to manage information technologies without some additional help. If we want to ensure that records and evidence are protected, we need to establish collaborative and supportive relationships with those agencies or individuals who provide this specialist support.

To determine your level of progress for **Destination 4, Milestone 3,** ask the following questions:

- Do you know who selects, operates, and maintains information technologies for use by officials within your organization? Is that individual or group formally part of your department or unit? Do they work in a separate part of your organization? Are they a separate agency? Or do you rely on a combination of individuals or groups to support information technology management?
- Has your organization developed an ongoing relationship with these individuals or groups? Is this relationship formal, informal, planned, or unplanned?
- Does this relationship allow your organization to work with these individuals or groups to select and manage information technologies so that they are support effective records management?

Think about these questions as you determine which statement best reflects your organization's current level of progress. You may wish to review relevant resources in **Part 7** first.

WHAT IS OUR ORGANIZATION'S LEVEL OF PROGRESS?

Which statement is most applicable to our organization?	**Levels of Progress**
Our organization is not aware of the existence or role of individuals or groups responsible for selecting, operating, and maintaining information technologies.	UNMANAGED
Our organization is aware of individuals or groups responsible for selecting, operating, and maintaining information technology, but we do not have a relationship with them and we do not have input into decisions around the selection or use of information technologies for our own organization.	EMERGING
Our organization works with the individuals or groups responsible for selecting, operating, and maintaining information technology, but we have not worked together to plan strategies for ensuring information technologies support the protection of records and evidence.	DEFINED
Our organization has developed an ongoing relationship with the individuals or groups responsible for selecting, operating, and maintaining information technology, and we coordinate decisions about information technology use so that records and evidence are managed appropriately.	MANAGED
Our organization has a formal and ongoing partnership with the individuals or groups responsible for selecting, operating, and maintaining information technology, that includes full participation by both information technology specialists and records management staff to plan the selection, maintenance, and use of information technologies so that records and evidence are created, managed, and protected adequately.	PROACTIVE
"Not relevant" could be applicable if your organization has no access to information technology experts. In that case, your organization may need to establish a process for selecting and managing information technology, with due regard for records management needs and requirements.	NOT RELEVANT

To support this milestone, your **team** could include staff in the organization who make decisions about information technologies, as well as officials who understand the organization's records and evidence needs. Your team could also benefit from inputs from information technology specialists. Ideally these would be the internal or external representatives responsible for decision making about information technology, but if there are no such specialists associated with your organization, you may want to ask external specialists to provide advice during the planning process.

WHAT ACTIONS CAN OUR ORGANIZATION TAKE?

UNMANAGED EMERGING	➢ Identify the individuals or groups responsible for selecting, operating, and maintaining information technology for your organization and gather information about their roles, responsibilities, and services. ➢ Research comparable activities in other jurisdictions and document key findings. ➢ Organize orientation sessions with individuals or groups responsible information technology to discuss options and strategies for collaboration and information sharing. ➢ Identify senior managers in your organization who have responsibility for decisions around selecting and financing the acquisition of information technologies.
DEFINED	➢ Prepare awareness raising resources to share with senior managers, to seek financial and organizational support for stronger links with the individuals or groups responsible for information technology. ➢ Ensure senior managers actively participate in planning information technology strategies and actions, to maintain consistent input and support.
MANAGED	➢ Formalize a working relationship with the individuals or groups, completing a formal or information statement of cooperation, to support linkages between selecting and using information technologies and protecting records and evidence. ➢ Consider developing a cross-institutional standing committee or working group to meet regularly and advise each other on current activities and concerns.
PROACTIVE	➢ Produce and disseminate awareness raising information highlighting the relationship between information technologies and records and evidence. ➢ Pursue specific projects with the individuals or groups responsible for information technology, to plan strategic actions.
NOT RELEVANT	➢ If your organization has no access to information technology experts, you may need to establish a process for selecting and managing information technology. ➢ Contact experts in other jurisdictions to solicit guidance about how to develop effective approaches to information technology management. ➢ Plan a strategic approach to selecting and managing information technologies to ensure records and evidence needs and requirements are addressed.

Outputs might include communications with individuals or groups responsible for information technology; project proposals and plans; formal agreements or informal memoranda of understanding; and awareness raising and orientation materials. If your organization needs to provide information technology services itself, you will need to develop strategic and project plans, policies and procedures, awareness and orientation materials, presentation materials, and other core outputs.

Destination 5: Our organization manages records effectively and accountably

The primary purpose of records management is to establish processes for creating and managing records and evidence, so they serve as authentic sources of proof. By adopting standards, establishing policies, and supporting day to day processes for *making* and *keeping* records, organizations can ensure they document their actions, transactions, and decisions accurately. Am authentic record is well made in the first place, then it is stored safely for as long as needed, so that it is always accessible.

Organizations with public responsibilities have an obligation to ensure that the evidence of their work is managed effectively and accountably. That evidence, whether a paper record or electronic information in a database, serves as authentic proof of actions, transactions, and decisions. If records are not managed well, filing cabinets and computers fill up with duplicate or obsolete records. Money is spent on equipment and technology to hold unneeded records, while important evidence cannot be found. *Not* managing records is much more hazardous than managing them from the start.

Determining your organization's level of progress for each of the following milestones will help you move toward the destination of **managing records effectively and accountably.**

	Milestone 1	Our organization **makes records** when they are needed.
	Milestone 2	Our organization **identifies** and **organizes records** logically.
	Milestone 3	Our organization **describes** records and evidence consistently.
	Milestone 4	Our organization **assigns responsibility** for records.
	Milestone 5	Our organization **supports staff** to manage records and evidence effectively.

When you have finished answering the statements for each milestone, as shown on the following pages, add your answers to the tracking tool. Then you can review your answers to determine your organization's current level of progress. Are you in the danger zones of UNMANAGED or EMERGING? Or are you in the safer zones of DEFINED, MANAGED, or PROACTIVE?

You can then turn to the guidance and suggestions to see what steps you can take to improve your organization's progress and move closer to the destination.

Destination 5, Milestone 1
Our organization makes records when they are needed

Societies function best when decisions are made with respect for the rights and requirements of everyone, not just a select few. A new highway should meet the needs of a large portion of the population, not just a handful of drivers. Decisions about who can drive a car should be based on public needs, not personal wishes.

Similarly, organizations have a duty to act on behalf of the public. To demonstrate that they have met that public duty, organizations need to provide evidence of their actions, transactions, and decisions. Otherwise, the public cannot understand what was decided, or ask questions or raise concerns. This responsibility to provide evidence is commonly known as a "duty to document": a requirement that an organization *make* records or evidence of key actions or decisions and then keep that evidence so it can be made available whenever it is needed.

A duty to document is not intended to force an organization to make *more* records. Rather, duty to document requirements compel an organization to create and retain the *right* records: those that provide full and accurate evidence of important activities. For example, a legally binding agreement should be documented in a written contract, and a decision to change the use of a piece of land should be documented in property records.

A duty to document is more than just an internal policy or procedure. Ideally, a duty to document requirement is incorporated into an organization's legislation or regulations. All offices within the organization can then understand the scope of their responsibilities for documenting actions or decisions. The organization would identify the specific types of records that must be created to respect duty to document requirements, and procedures would be established to help staff make and keep records in compliance with the requirements.

To determine your level of progress for **Destination 5, Milestone 1,** ask the following questions:

- Can you identify examples of actions, transactions, or decisions that ought to be documented?
- Does your organization create records for these actions? Which actions? What types of record?
- Do existing requirements for making and keeping records ensure that the organization captures important evidence of its actions, transactions, and decisions?
- Has your organization researched the concept of "duty to document" and considered the application of such requirements in your jurisdiction?

Think about these questions as you determine which statement best reflects your organization's current level of progress. You may wish to review relevant resources in **Part 7** first.

WHAT IS OUR ORGANIZATION'S LEVEL OF PROGRESS?

Which statement is most applicable to our organization?	Levels of Progress
Our organization applies no controls over whether or when officers create records or evidence to support any action, transaction or decision taken by the organization. We have not considered the adoption of duty to document requirements.	UNMANAGED
Our organization requires officers to create records to support specific actions or decisions, but we have not developed a consistent, organization-wide approach to documenting our actions, transactions, or decisions.	EMERGING
Our organization is working with policy makers and legislators to develop and adopt duty to document requirements, but the organization has not yet completed or implemented this work, or we are considering such requirements only for specific areas of activity, not across the whole organization.	DEFINED
Our organization has adopted formal duty to document requirements and is in the process of establishing mechanisms for ensuring officials adhere to these requirements. Implementation is in the early stages or the requirements are not yet adopted consistently across the organization.	MANAGED
Our organization has adopted formal duty to document requirements and has developed a strategic approach to ensuring officials comply with these requirement, with specific guidance about when records or evidence need to be created, why, and in what form; we provide guidance and ongoing support to help staff apply these duty to document requirements.	PROACTIVE
"Not relevant" could be applicable if your organization is not legally bound to provide records or evidence to the public under any circumstances. While some organizations may not have a legal obligation to create and capture records as evidence, however, accountability and transparency are enhanced when records are created to document an organization's key actions, transactions, or decisions.	NOT RELEVANT

To support this milestone, your **team** could include policy makers and legal advisors involved with administering laws, regulations, and policies across the organization, or officials with legal experience, who can review the organization's activities and identify activities that should be documented regularly to support accountability and transparency.

WHAT ACTIONS CAN OUR ORGANIZATION TAKE?

UNMANAGED EMERGING	➢ Collect resources about duty to document requirements from comparable organizations and review them for useful examples or ideas. ➢ Identify and review relevant national or international standards to analyze best-practice approaches to the application of duty to document requirements. ➢ Identify explicit or implicit requirements for making or keeping records or evidence in your jurisdiction, to identify duty to document requirements. (This analysis will coincide with research done for **Destination 1, Milestone 3.**) ➢ Document which actions, transactions, or decisions should be documented across your organization, then which *are* documented and which are *not,* to identify gaps or overlaps in the record-making and record-keeping process.
DEFINED	➢ Seek senior management support for managing records to comply with duty to document requirements. ➢ If possible, participate actively developing duty to document requirements, to ensure records management needs are considered. ➢ Identify specific types of record needed to meet duty to document requirements.
MANAGED	➢ As duty to document requirements are formalized, monitor progress with their implementation to identify issues or concerns. ➢ Develop policies, procedures, guidance, and training materials to support the implementation of duty to document requirements. ➢ Meet regularly with staff to address challenges or questions with the application of duty to document requirements.
PROACTIVE	➢ Review and revise policies, procedures, guidance, and training materials regularly, particularly when new or changed priorities emerge that might affect compliance. ➢ Share your experiences with managing duty to document requirements with senior managers to keep them informed and supportive. ➢ Share your experiences with colleagues from other agencies, to foster information sharing and collaboration.
NOT RELEVANT	➢ Your organization may not be legally bound to provide records or evidence to the public, but because the underlying philosophy of records management is to preserve evidence **and** make it available, all organizations are encouraged to consider how they can use records to support accountability and transparency.

Outputs might include lists existing and potential requirements for documentation; lists of records and documentation to be created and/or captured to support duty to document requirements; project planning documents and progress reports; policies and procedures; and awareness raising, orientation, and training materials.

Destination 5, Milestone 2
Our organization identifies and organizes records logically

Vehicles can be categorized into groups: cars, buses, bicycles, motor scooters, airplanes, helicopters, rowboats, canoes… the list is endless. We decide which category of vehicle to use based on several factors – where we are going, how much money we have, whether we are travelling alone or with others, whether we are carrying baggage, and so on. In fact, we rarely use the term "vehicle" at all. We often refer only to the category of vehicle we are using now, whether it is a car, a moped, or a train.

The word "record" is also a broad term. There are many categories of record. To access and use records, we need to know the different categories of record in our care, so we can organize those categories and manage the records consistently. We do not organize records by **form** but by **function.**

What purpose do the records serve? Why do we need them? For example, all records related to the function of managing the annual budget would be grouped together under the function of Budgeting and Financial Management. Some of those records may be minutes, reports, memos, emails, and text messages. Their form is less important than their purpose. Similarly, all records related to the function of maintaining building and property would be grouped together under the function of Facilities Maintenance. Some of those records might also be minutes, reports, memos, emails, and text messages. Again, form is less important than purpose. If we kept all records by form, how would we find anything?

Classification is the process of categorizing records into groups by function and purpose (and then, if needed, by type). The first step in classification is to conduct an inventory of all records and evidence across the organization. The inventory is a vital tool that not only documents the purpose and the form of evidence but can also record information about storage locations, privacy requirements, equipment and technologies used, and so on. The inventory forms the basis for classifying records and then for scheduling them, as per **Destination 7**. (Note that records classification is different from privacy or security classification, which are addressed as part of **Destination 6**.)

To determine your level of progress for **Destination 5, Milestone 2,** ask the following questions:

- Has your organization ever grouped records and evidence into categories (classifying them)?
- If so, what was the system did you use? Is that classification system still usable?
- Do you classify all records – paper, analog, and electronic – or only one form or type?
- If you do not have a formal classification system in place, how do you organize records now?

Think about these questions as you determine which statement best reflects your organization's current level of progress. You may wish to review relevant resources in **Part 7** first.

WHAT IS OUR ORGANIZATION'S LEVEL OF PROGRESS?

Which statement is most applicable to our organization?	Levels of Progress
Our organization has not conducted an inventory of our records or evidence, whether paper, analog, or electronic; we have not classified records or formally grouped them into categories to organize them consistently.	UNMANAGED
Our organization has conducted an inventory of paper or analog or electronic records, but not of all types, or we have conducted an inventory that is no longer current, or we have classified some records into groups by function, but we have not applied those classification schemes consistently.	EMERGING
Our organization has conducted an inventory of paper and analog and electronic records, and we have established classification schemes to organize those records and other sources of evidence by function and purpose. We are in the process of implementing them, but the process has not been applied consistently across the organization.	DEFINED
Our organization has conducted an inventory of paper and analog and electronic records and established basic classification schemes, organizing records and evidence by function and purpose. We have implemented the schemes across the organization, but we do not monitor their use consistently.	MANAGED
Our organization has established classification schemes for all records and evidence, no matter the form or medium; we have implemented those schemes across the organization. We train staff in the use of the schemes and monitor the use of the schemes regularly and update all schemes and associated training and guidance resources whenever needed.	PROACTIVE
Not applicable – all organizations are advised to conduct an inventory of all records and evidence, which should be updated as needed, and then to develop and maintain formal classification schemes, so that records and evidence are managed consistently and appropriately.	NOT RELEVANT

To support this milestone, your **team** will ideally include staff who have knowledge about and experience with records inventory and classification processes. As with several of the milestones for **Destination 5,** the best scenario is to engage a records manager, in a permanent position if possible, but, if not, then as a consultant or advisor providing short-term assistance with key records management tasks. Professional associations or groups can help you to locate qualified records managers in your jurisdiction.

WHAT ACTIONS CAN OUR ORGANIZATION TAKE?

UNMANAGED	➢ Research classification schemes for other organizations or jurisdictions. ➢ Review best-practice guidance about the development of inventories and classification schemes. ➢ Carry out an inventory of records all records and evidence across the organization. (A records/evidence inventory is central to a robust and sustainable records management program, serving as a resource not just for classifying and scheduling but also for many other records operations. Ideally, the inventory will be as comprehensive as possible to support other records management tasks, not just classifying and managing records: it can include information about functions, types of record; time spans; locations; privacy or security requirements; etc.) ➢ Consult with staff across the organization to help develop the inventory and to document different staff requirements for records and evidence, which will help you develop effective and sustainable classification schemes.
EMERGING	
DEFINED	➢ Develop a project plan to develop (or revise) and implement classification schemes and management processes; consider implementing these incrementally if needed to support reviews, tests, and revisions. ➢ Review and revise existing classification schemes, or develop new schemes, and revise and update them based on inventory results, internal and external research, and consultations with staff and senior managers across the organization. ➢ Develop and deliver guidance and training resources to help staff use and maintain the classification schemes easily.
MANAGED	➢ Review classification schemes and overall record making and record keeping processes across the organization as part of a formal monitoring and auditing plan, to support staff and ensure the schemes remain current and effective. ➢ Update or revise the inventory and classification schemes as functions, technologies, or processes change, to reflect current conditions accurately.
PROACTIVE	➢ Maintain and upgrade training and guidance resources regularly. ➢ Continue to monitor and audit processes to ensure the classification schemes reflect operations fully and accurately. ➢ Investigate new or different technologies, such as automated systems for classifying and storing records, to assess their applicability in your organization.

Outputs might include an inventory of records and evidence; project plans and progress reports; classification schemes for all organizational records; policies and procedures to support implementation of schemes; and awareness raising, orientation, and training materials.

Destination 5, Milestone 3
Our organization describes records and evidence consistently

When we go on a journey, we rely on maps, plans, and guidebooks. These tools describe the journey, so that we can know where are and where we are going. But to understand those descriptive tools, we also need some context about them. What is the scale of the map? A scale of 1 cm to 100 m is different from 1 cm to 100,000 m. What measurement is used to calculate distances? Miles or kilometres? What language is used to show places and names? The city of Florence is known as Firenze in Italian, Floransa in Turkish, Florenz in German, and Florença in Portuguese. To understand the information in the tools; we need information *about* the information. We need **metadata:** descriptive information that provides context about other information.

We also need **metadata** to explain records and evidence. Metadata is not just information about the content *of* records. Metadata provides context *about* the records, which is why it is called "metadata" or data about data. Records-related metadata may include document titles, authors, versions, and dates. We can distinguish between the minutes of a financial meeting and minutes of a staff meeting by reading the actual records, but we should also be able to tell the difference by accessing the metadata.

With paper records, metadata is normally captured on the document itself (in the letterhead, perhaps) or on the file folder label. With analog records such as video recordings or audio cassettes, the metadata is added to the box or other container holding the recording. With electronic records, different metadata elements are normally captured in a "properties" dialog box built into the computer software.

To manage records, organizations decide what metadata should *always* be captured and what metadata *may* be captured if needed. The metadata elements are then standardized. For example, a standardized document title may be "Budget Meeting Minutes," not "minutes of meeting." Standardized dates may be "2020-04-15," not "April 15, 2020" in one case and "15 April 2020" in another.

To determine your level of progress for **Destination 5, Milestone 3,** ask the following questions:

- Does your organization assign titles and names and dates to records consistently or does everyone decide how to name and file records themselves?
- Has your organization ever standardized processes for describing records or evidence? If so, can you use that documentation to develop or update metadata processes?
- Do you need different metadata for different functions across the organization? If so, can you ensure metadata requirements are applied consistently while respecting different needs?

Think about these questions as you determine which statement best reflects your organization's current level of progress. You may wish to review relevant resources in **Part 7** first.

WHAT IS OUR ORGANIZATION'S LEVEL OF PROGRESS?

Which statement is most applicable to our organization?	Levels of Progress
Our organization does not have a process for capturing or managing metadata or other descriptive information about records or evidence; every individual manages the naming and description of records according to his or her own needs and priorities.	UNMANAGED
Our organization has developed processes for capturing metadata and other descriptive information about records and evidence, but these processes are managed by different units within the organization to meet their own needs and priorities; there is no process to ensure consistency.	EMERGING
Our organization has developed processes for capturing metadata and other descriptive information regularly, but these processes are not based on standards and are not managed or controlled to ensure they are applied consistently.	DEFINED
Our organization has developed formal processes for capturing metadata and other descriptive information, based on accepted standards and defined by formal policies and procedures; we have established mechanisms for ensuring metadata elements are applied consistently.	MANAGED
Our organization has developed formal processes for capturing metadata other descriptive information, based on accepted standards and defined by formal policies and procedures; we have established mechanisms for ensuring metadata elements are applied consistently; we train staff in metadata management; we monitor and audit metadata use consistently to support compliance, and we update metadata requirements as needed to ensure they remain relevant and useful over time.	PROACTIVE
Not applicable – all organizations are advised to establish formal processes for capturing metadata and other descriptive information, based on accepted standards and protocols, to ensure that all records and evidence by the organization remain accessible and usable.	NOT RELEVANT

To support this milestone, your **team** will ideally include staff who have knowledge about and experience with records inventory and classification processes. As with several of the milestones for **Destination 5,** the best scenario is to engage a records manager, in a permanent position if possible, but, if not, then as a consultant or advisor providing short-term assistance with key records management tasks. Professional associations or groups can help you to locate qualified records managers in your jurisdiction.

WHAT ACTIONS CAN OUR ORGANIZATION TAKE?

UNMANAGED EMERGING	➢ Research the processes used to capture metadata and descriptive information in other organizations or jurisdictions. ➢ Review best-practice guidance about how to develop and implement metadata schemes so they are effective and sustainable. ➢ Ask staff to identify the types of descriptive information (metadata) they capture, or would like to capture, to support their access to and use of records and evidence. This information will help you develop effective processes for metadata management and description of records and evidence.
DEFINED	➢ Review your organization's existing processes for capturing metadata and other descriptive information. ➢ Develop a project plan to develop (or revise) and implement metadata schemes and management processes; consider implementing these incrementally if needed to support reviews, tests, and revisions. ➢ Revise and update processes, drawing on completed records inventories and classification schemes, as well as on consultations with staff. ➢ Develop and deliver guidance and training resources to help staff apply metadata schemes and management processes easily.
MANAGED	➢ Review metadata schemes and management processes regularly, as part of a formal monitoring and auditing plan, to support staff and ensure the schemes and processes remain current and effective. ➢ Update or revise the metadata schemes and processes as functions, technologies, or processes change, to reflect current conditions accurately.
PROACTIVE	➢ Maintain and upgrade training and guidance resources regularly. ➢ Continue to monitor and audit processes to ensure the metadata schemes and management processes reflect operations fully and accurately. ➢ Investigate new or different technologies, such as automated systems for capturing metadata, to assess their applicability in your organization.

Outputs might include lists of required and optional metadata elements; project plans and progress reports; policies and procedures; and awareness raising, orientation, and training materials.

Destination 5, Milestone 4
Our organization assigns responsibility for records

Imagine arriving at the station to take the train to work, only to discover that, even though the train is at the station, the driver has not arrived. You have neither the authority nor the expertise to drive the train yourself. All you can do is wait for the driver to appear or find another way to get to work.

Organizations, from a government to a railway company, work in teams. We all need to meet our obligations as part of our team. If we are the person on the team responsible for driving the train, we need to arrive at work on time. But if we are not that person, we should not try to drive the train. We need to let those with responsibility, authority, and ability do their job, while we do ours.

Records management is also a team-based activity. Everyone on the team needs to know their own responsibilities for managing records. These responsibilities may include keeping filing systems clean, storing critical records safely, and removing obsolete records regularly. But how do we know which records are critical and which are obsolete? How do we know if we are responsible or not?

To help staff work effectively, organizations define formal responsibilities for different records management tasks, especially the **Office of Primary Responsibility** and the **Official Record Holder**.

The **Office of Primary Responsibility** is the unit responsible for holding the master copy of a series of records. For instance, the office of the Head of Finance may be the Office of Primary Responsibility for the minutes of budget meetings. Other offices are not responsible for keeping those minutes, and staff can destroy their copies as soon as the official versions in the Finance Office are safely stored.

The **Official Record Holder** is the person within a unit (or team) responsible for locating and storing master records. In the office of the Head of Finance, the Administrative Assistant might be responsible for storing the minutes of budget meetings. No one else in the department would need to keep copies; the Administrative Assistant has the responsibility, authority, and ability to perform that job. (Ideally, of course, a second member of staff would be trained to serve as backup in case of emergency.)

To determine your level of progress for **Destination 5, Milestone 4,** ask the following questions:

- Does your organization identify an Office of Primary Responsibility or an Official Record Holder?
- Do you train Official Record Holders in best-practice approaches to capturing/storing records?
- Are others in the organization directed to remove obsolete records regularly, to reduce the volume of unwanted documents? Are they given training and support to do this work?

Think about these questions as you determine which statement best reflects your organization's current level of progress. You may wish to review relevant resources in **Part 7** first.

WHAT IS OUR ORGANIZATION'S LEVEL OF PROGRESS?

Which statement is most applicable to our organization?	**Levels of Progress**
Our organization has not adopted the concepts of Office of Primary Responsibility or Official Record Holder: we do not formally identify responsibilities for creating and managing records or other sources of evidence, including responsibilities for managing masters or duplicates.	UNMANAGED
Our organization has established sporadic or ad hoc processes to identify responsibilities for creating and managing records or other sources of evidence, including responsibilities for managing masters or duplicates, but these processes are not applied consistently.	EMERGING
Our organization has established basic protocols for identifying responsibilities for creating and managing records or other sources of evidence, including responsibilities for managing masters or duplicates, but these processes are not consistently enforced.	DEFINED
Our organization has developed formal protocols for identifying responsibilities for creating and managing records or other sources of evidence, including designating Offices of Primary Responsibility and Official Record Holders, and we trains staff in their duties and monitor their activities to support consistency and effectiveness.	MANAGED
Our organization has established formal protocols for identifying Offices of Primary Responsibility and Official Record Holders across the organization; we train staff in their duties and responsibilities; we monitor and audit their activities consistently; and we review the status of those designations regularly, updating or changing them whenever needed to maintain success.	PROACTIVE
Not applicable – all organizations are advised to identify responsibilities for creating and managing records or other sources of evidence, particularly by identifying Offices of Primary Responsibility and Official Record Holders across the organization and training all staff to manage masters or duplicates according to policy.	NOT RELEVANT

To support this milestone, your **team** could include decision makers who can oversee the identification of Offices of Primary Responsibility and Official Record Holders; other members of the team might include anyone directly involved in creating and managing records management systems, such as those who design and maintain paper or electronic filing systems; these team members can help document new or different record-keeping roles and responsibilities in training and guidance materials.

WHAT ACTIONS CAN OUR ORGANIZATION TAKE?

UNMANAGED EMERGING	➢ Research the processes used to decide the Office of Primary Responsibility and Official Record Holder designations and duties in other organizations or jurisdictions. ➢ Review best-practice guidance about how to determine responsibilities for creating and managing records, including Office of Primary Responsibility and Official Record Holder designations. ➢ Consult with staff across the organization to identify current practices in creating and managing records, including identifying different responsibilities. This information will help you identify which unit and which officials should serve as the Office of Primary Responsibility and the Official Record Holders.
DEFINED	➢ Review your organization's existing processes for determining responsibilities for creating and managing records. ➢ Develop a project plan to develop (or revise) and implement Office of Primary Responsibility and the Official Record Holders designations and duties. ➢ Develop and implement the designations, in consultation with staff to ensure they understand and agree with the decisions made. ➢ Develop and deliver guidance and training resources to help staff fulfil their responsibilities for creating and managing records, particularly in relation to Office of Primary Responsibility and the Official Record Holders designations and duties.
MANAGED	➢ Review Office of Primary Responsibility and Official Record Holders requirements and processes regularly, as part of a formal monitoring and auditing plan, to support staff and ensure the requirements and processes remain current and effective. ➢ Update or revise Office of Primary Responsibility and Official Record Holders requirements and processes as functions, technologies, or processes change, to reflect current conditions accurately.
PROACTIVE	➢ Maintain and upgrade training and guidance resources regularly. ➢ Continue to monitor and audit processes to ensure the Office of Primary Responsibility and Official Record Holders designations and duties reflect operations fully and accurately and staff can perform their responsibilities easily and consistently.

Outputs might include lists of Offices of Primary Responsibility and Official Record Holders (and designated backups); project plans and progress reports; policies and procedures; and awareness raising, orientation, and training materials.

Destination 5, Milestone 5
Our organization supports staff to manage records and evidence effectively

How can we go on a journey if we do not know how to drive a car? Or pick up groceries at the local shop if we do not know how to ride a bicycle? Vehicles are not helpful to anyone if people are not given the training, guidance, and support they need to use them.

All the policies in the world will not help an organization improve its records management practices if staff are not trained and supported to create and manage records and evidence effectively. This *Roadmap* includes many recommendations for training staff. But like any other aspect of records management, staff guidance and training must be planned and coordinated to be effective. And basic training must be *mandatory!* A team cannot function at peak efficiency if some of the team members – staff with daily records management responsibilities – are not given the training and support they need.

Ideally, by the time an organization is ready to train staff in records management tasks, it should have a qualified records manager on staff. That person could then develop and deliver training and guidance as well as answer questions and provide support after formal training is done. But many organizations need to train staff in records management long before they hire a records manager. Staff need to manage records and evidence *now*; they cannot wait until a dedicated records manager is hired.

Staff training and guidance might address various milestones in this *Roadmap,* including how to

- comply with duty to document requirements
- classify and store records
- capture and apply metadata and descriptive information
- serve as the Office of Primary Responsibility or the Official Record Holder
- fulfil access, privacy, and security obligations
- dispose of records safely, according to policy.

Once staff have been trained in these and other core records management tasks, they will be able to do their jobs better, and the organization will be better positioned to manage all its records and evidence.

To determine your level of progress for **Destination 5, Milestone 5,** ask the following questions:

- Has your organization ever developed training and guidance materials for records management?
- If not, how do staff learn how to execute their records-related duties?
- What training methods work best in your organization: for example, in-person training sessions, printed guides, computer-based learning, self-study, workshops, or other methods?

Think about these questions as you determine which statement best reflects your organization's current level of progress. You may wish to review relevant resources in **Part 7** first.

WHAT IS OUR ORGANIZATION'S LEVEL OF PROGRESS?

Which statement is most applicable to our organization?	**Levels of Progress**
Our organization does not provide records management training or guidance to our staff; we are not aware of existing training opportunities to support records management awareness raising and capacity building.	UNMANAGED
Our organization is aware of the need for records management training and guidance, but we have not developed any training or guidance programs or resources, nor have we used existing training opportunities.	EMERGING
Our organization is planning to develop records management training and guidance initiatives and tools, or we plan to make use of existing training opportunities, but we have not established a training program yet.	DEFINED
Our organization has developed records management training and guidance initiatives and tools, and we provide these opportunities for staff on request, but we have not established a formal training program, nor have we made staff training in records management mandatory.	MANAGED
Our organization has dedicated staff time and other resources to developing and delivering records management training and guidance initiatives, and we deliver mandatory training to all staff; we also deliver supplemental training for selected staff according to their roles and responsibilities. We monitor progress and update training materials when conditions change and when new or different guidance is needed.	PROACTIVE
"Not relevant" could be applicable if your organization works within a larger framework and some other agency is responsible for developing and delivering records management training and tools: for instance, you may be part of a government with a dedicated archival institution that develops and delivers records management training for all government staff, in which case you can send staff to different training sessions as needed.	NOT RELEVANT

To support this milestone, your **team** will ideally include staff who have knowledge about and experience with records management, such as a qualified records manager who can develop and deliver training sessions for staff. If not, you may choose to engage a consultant or advisor to provide training and guidance, or you may have staff complete online learning or self-study courses offered by national archival institutions or professional associations.

WHAT ACTIONS CAN OUR ORGANIZATION TAKE?

UNMANAGED EMERGING	➢ Ask staff to identify current records management issues, to determine priorities for developing and delivering training and guidance. ➢ Research training and guidance resources produced for comparable organizations in your jurisdiction or elsewhere. ➢ Identify other providers of records management training, such as national archival institutions, professional associations, or international organizations, and research their current training offerings. ➢ Identify relevant training resources and consider whether you should adopt external training opportunities until you can develop your own training program.
DEFINED	➢ Develop a project plan or business case for records training and guidance. ➢ Identify senior managers who should be briefed on the need for records-related training and guidance, so they can lend their support. ➢ Begin developing training and guidance for priority records issues; draw on of external training resources if they can be adapted to suit your needs. ➢ Test training and guidance materials with selected staff and revise as needed to ensure the materials are effective before using them more widely.
MANAGED	➢ Formalize training and guidance resources as needed to construct a cohesive training program for records management. ➢ If you are using external materials, consider developing internal materials as time and resources allow, to ensure future training is specific to your organization. ➢ Schedule training sessions to ensure all staff can access training opportunities. ➢ Provide access to guidance materials and other resources using the best tools and technologies for your organization, whether print, electronic, or other.
PROACTIVE	➢ Review and update training and guidance materials regularly, based on feedback from training sessions and as gleaned through monitoring and auditing. ➢ Identify key staff who can become trainers themselves and support “train the trainer” opportunities to increase their knowledge and capacity.
NOT RELEVANT	➢ If another agency is responsible for developing and delivering records management training, identify your organization’s training priorities that agency can ensure your staff are provided with guidance relevant to their needs.

Outputs might include project plans and progress reports; briefing notes and background materials; awareness raising, orientation, and training materials. Note there will be considerable overlap with the training resources you may develop to support other milestones; all training materials should be coordinated to reduce overlap and support consistency.

Destination 6:
Our organization provides appropriate access to records

Organizations have a responsibility to let citizens and the public know about official actions, transactions, and decisions. Whenever possible, therefore, organizations should make records and evidence available as widely as possible.

Not everyone has a right to see all the evidence an organization creates or collects. An individual's financial records should normally be kept private, for instance, unless that person has been accused of acting illegally and the financial records must be released to confirm or deny the allegations. Records about the location of a government's military equipment are also kept secret; potentially hostile agents should not be able to access such sensitive information or else they may use it to mount an attack.

The philosophy behind access, privacy, and security laws is to establish a balance between providing widespread public access and protecting the rights of individuals or groups. Ideally, organizations will start with the view that they should "proactively disclose" records whenever possible: regularly making records and evidence publicly available, *before* being asked. But sometimes access must be restricted, both internally – within the organization itself – and externally – from the wider public – to respect privacy and security. To balance access with privacy and security, an organization is wise to manage records as part of a continuum of care across their life cycle. This continuum of care allows the organization to keep track of when, how, and why records and evidence have been made available.

Determining your organization's level of progress for each of the following milestones will help you move toward the destination of ensuring your organization provides **appropriate access to records.**

	Milestone 1	Our organization **proactively releases records** to the public.
	Milestone 2	Our organization **protects private and personal information**.
	Milestone 3	Our organization **protects sensitive or secret information**.

When you have finished answering the statements for each milestone, as shown on the following pages, add your answers to the tracking tool. Then you can review your answers to determine your organization's current level of progress. Are you in the danger zones of UNMANAGED or EMERGING? Or are you in the safer zones of DEFINED, MANAGED, or PROACTIVE?

You can then turn to the guidance and suggestions to see what steps you can take to improve your organization's progress and move closer to the destination.

Destination 6, Milestone 1
Our organization proactively releases records to the public

Most of the roads we drive on are open to all users without charge. Road travel is accessible to a large portion of the public. We may have to pay to access some roads; the tolls charged may be necessary to help pay for the construction of the road, but they can limit access to those cannot afford the COST At the same time, "free" highways are not really free. We pay for maintenance and repairs through taxes.

The principle of "proactive disclosure" is the records management equivalent of a free highway. It is based on the idea that the public has a right to access some evidence without having to ask in advance, just as they have the right to drive on some roads without paying a toll. Proactive disclosure makes evidence available by default.

An organization that adopts the principle of proactive disclosure might make some records publicly available regularly rather than wait for the public to request access. Such records might include major contracts; job descriptions and pay scales; travel expenditures; audit reports; high-level briefing notes; and reports tabled in parliament or the legislature. Some organizations also make older records available, to promote public awareness of the history of the organization. For instance, many organizations publish a directory of the names of senior officials over the past, or they make available historical records such as meeting minutes, annual reports, budgets, and laws or regulations.

Releasing records and evidence proactively supports accountability and transparency. The process can also save the organization time and money. It is much easier to release high-interest, low-risk evidence regularly than to store it away and then retrieve it repeatedly, every time someone asks for a copy.

An organization may also decide to release records in advance, if it thinks a third party is about to release contradictory or inaccurate information. It can counter falsehoods with the release of factual evidence. By acting first, the organization can demonstrate its desire to be open and accountable, and it can present its actions and decisions independently. Proactive disclosure can be an effective tool in the organization's effort to uphold accountability, transparency, and integrity.

To determine your level of progress for **Destination 6, Milestone 1,** ask the following questions:

- Does your organization adhere to any proactive disclosure laws, regulations, or protocols? If so, what types of records or evidence are made available, how often, and in what form?
- If your organization does not follow proactive disclosure protocols, would it consider doing so if the process were appropriately managed? What types of records might be made available?
- What would be the benefits or risks of a proactive disclosure policy for your organization?

Think about these questions as you determine which statement best reflects your organization's current level of progress. You may wish to review relevant resources in **Part 7** first.

WHAT IS OUR ORGANIZATION'S LEVEL OF PROGRESS?

Which statement is most applicable to our organization?	**Levels of Progress**
Our organization has not established a proactive disclosure policy or any processes for proactively releasing records and evidence to the public.	UNMANAGED
Our organization releases records and evidence to the public periodically, but the practice is inconsistent and not guided by an overarching policy in support of proactive disclosure.	EMERGING
Our organization releases records and evidence to the public periodically; we do not document the process consistently and do not monitor public access to or use of the records released.	DEFINED
Our organization has developed a formal process for releasing some records and evidence to the public, in keeping with the principles of proactive disclosure, but we have not formalized a proactive disclosure policy or released a large quantity of evidence yet.	MANAGED
Our organization has adopted a formal proactive disclosure policy, which supports the regular release of records and evidence to the public; we oversee this process with regular monitoring and audits, including tracking public interest in and use of publicly accessible records. We release both historical and current records, with the goal of enhancing public understanding of the organization's role and work through history.	PROACTIVE
"Not relevant" could be applicable if your organization is not directed by an "open government" or "proactive disclosure" philosophy or policy. While some organizations may not have a legal obligation to release records publicly, accountability and transparency are enhanced when records and information are shared with the public in a spirit of openness.	NOT RELEVANT

To support this milestone, your **team** include policy makers and legal advisors involved with determining access and privacy requirements. You may also wish to involve officials with a background in the law to analyze the legal implications of proactive disclosure and help identify the different groups of records and information the organization may decide to make available, to support public access while protecting individual privacy and adhering to essential security requirements.

WHAT ACTIONS CAN OUR ORGANIZATION TAKE?

UNMANAGED	➢ Draw on the completed records inventory (and classification schemes if they are completed) to identify records and evidence that may be candidates for proactive disclosure. Be sure to identify the department or unit responsible, the location of records, and the information captured. (If possible, coordinate research for all milestones in **Destination 6;** the information you gather will support planning for proactive disclosure, privacy management, and the protection of sensitive or secret information.) ➢ Ask staff to identify records they already make publicly available and assess whether that evidence should be included in a proactive disclosure program. ➢ Research proactive disclosure protocols used by other organizations or jurisdictions. ➢ Review best-practice guidance about the management of proactive disclosure systems to identify issues and concerns relevant to your organization.
EMERGING	
DEFINED	➢ Develop a project plan to establish a formal proactive disclosure program. ➢ Develop and implement policies, procedures, and processes to support proactive disclosure, ensuring the processes are consistent and transparent. ➢ Test all processes before implementing them, to confirm they work effectively. ➢ Develop and deliver guidance, awareness raising, and training tools to help staff identify and manage records included in a proactive disclosure program.
MANAGED	➢ Track the use of records and evidence made available to the public through proactive disclosure and records made available upon request, to determine which records and evidence are used more often; this information will help you identify priorities for expansion or change of the proactive disclosure program. ➢ Update all processes regularly, especially when functions, technologies, or processes change, so that proactive disclosure evolves in a planned fashion.
PROACTIVE	➢ Maintain and upgrade training and guidance resources regularly, so that staff are familiar with the purpose, vision, and processes of proactive disclosure. ➢ Monitor and audit the system regularly to ensure it remains effective and useful and to confirm that no personal or secret information has been released in error. ➢ Investigate the use of new technologies to support proactive disclosure, such as automatically releasing selected records while protecting personal information.

Outputs might include lists and descriptions of records and evidence that may be released publicly, including current records and historical archives (this identification would also be incorporated into records classification schemes as appropriate); project plans and progress reports; policies and procedures; and awareness raising, orientation, and training materials.

Destination 6, Milestone 2
Our organization protects private and personal information

When we decide to go on a journey, we do not have to tell everyone where we are going. Unless our choice of destination is dangerous or restricted, it is reasonable to think that we do not have to publicize our trip to the world.

People deserve the same measure of privacy when records and evidence involve them in a personal way. An organization's records should only be seen by appropriate people, including the individual in question, but they should not necessarily be available to others within or outside of the organization. A common example is personal health and medical records. Organizations may have a legitimate reason to create or collect medical information about staff or citizens. This information needs to be protected: not everyone needs to know someone's blood test or surgery results.

The protocols established to protect privacy include establishing **privacy classifications:** formal identification of personal or private information in records and information. (Privacy classifications are often added to records classification structures, which were explained in **Destination 5, Milestone 2.**) To protect personal or private information, organizations benefit from establishing consistent and transparent methods for creating, capturing, using, sharing, and storing all records, including those containing personal information. Organizations should also track how and when records are made available for public use, so that the organization can demonstrate compliance with privacy requirements.

Many governments adopt laws and regulations to ensure personal privacy is protected. These requirements are often defined in "access," "privacy" or "freedom of information" legislation. One of the best-known pieces of legislation is the *General Data Protection Regulation* or *GDPR,* a European Union law that supports the protection of privacy in personal data or records. To adhere to *GDPR* requirements, governments, businesses, or other organizations that create, receive, or share personal information across the European Union (EU) and European Economic Area (EEA) must ensure that this information is not shared without permission. Even if an organization is not legally bound to follow *GDPR* requirements, many organizations have benefitted from following the principles of *GDPR* to strengthen their own processes for managing private and personal information.

To determine your level of progress for **Destination 6, Milestone 2,** ask the following questions:

- Does your organization have legislation or regulations in place to govern personal privacy?
- Do those requirements specifically address the creation and management of records?
- Does your organization assign privacy classifications to records to ensure they are protected?
- How does your organization address its responsibility to protect personal privacy?

Think about these questions as you determine which statement best reflects your organization's current level of progress. You may wish to review relevant resources in **Part 7** first.

WHAT IS OUR ORGANIZATION'S LEVEL OF PROGRESS?

Which statement is most applicable to our organization?	**Levels of Progress**
Our organization does not have legislation or regulations in place to protect personal and private information, and we have not taken any action to establish privacy classifications or processes for protecting personal or private information in the records or evidence our organization creates or captures.	UNMANAGED
Our organization does not have any legislation or regulations in place to protect personal and private information, but we have recognized the need for privacy protection; we have identified personal or private information in some records and evidence and limit access to those records, but these processes have not been applied consistently.	EMERGING
Our organization has passed legislation and/or regulations governing the protection of personal and private information, and/or we have identified personal or private information in records across the organization, but we have not established consistent processes for protecting that personal and private information.	DEFINED
Our organization has passed legislation and/or regulations to protect personal and private information and has established a formal process for assigning privacy classifications and manage privacy protections, based on accepted standards and protocols.	MANAGED
Our organization has passed legislation and/or regulations to protect personal and private information and has established a formal process for assigning privacy classifications and managing privacy protections, based on accepted standards and protocols, and the organization oversees this process with regular monitoring and audits.	PROACTIVE
Not applicable – all organizations are advised to establish and maintain processes for protecting personal and private information, including establishing privacy classifications for records, as well as managing records and evidence so that private and personal information is protected from unauthorized use.	NOT RELEVANT

To support this milestone, your **team** could include policy makers and legal advisors involved with determining access and privacy requirements. You may also wish to involve officials with experience managing personal and private records and evidence, to draw on their insights about best practice strategies to manage personal and private information.

WHAT ACTIONS CAN OUR ORGANIZATION TAKE?

UNMANAGED EMERGING	➢ Draw on the completed records inventory (and classification schemes if they are completed) to identify records and evidence that contain personal or private information. Be sure to identify the department or unit responsible, the location of records, and the information captured. (If possible, coordinate research for all milestones in **Destination 6;** the information you gather will support planning for proactive disclosure, privacy management, and the protection of sensitive or secret information.) ➢ Research privacy classifications and processes used by other organizations or jurisdictions. ➢ Review best-practice guidance about developing privacy classification schemes. ➢ Ask staff to identify all categories of records that contain personal information and assess how those records are created, used, and stored.
DEFINED	➢ Develop a project plan to implement privacy classification schemes. ➢ Establish policies, procedures, and processes to protect personal and private information. ➢ Ensure these processes are consistent, policy-based, and transparent, and test them before implementation to confirm they work effectively. ➢ Develop and deliver guidance, awareness raising, and training tools to help staff perform their duties.
MANAGED	➢ Regularly review existing classification schemes and records management processes to ensure personal and private information is managed appropriately; update or revise schemes and processes whenever required. ➢ Update all processes regularly, especially when functions, technologies, or processes change, so that private and personal information continues to be protected no matter what technology or systems are used.
PROACTIVE	➢ Maintain and upgrade training and guidance resources regularly. ➢ Continue to monitor and audit to ensure the schemes and processes used to protect private and personal information remain current and effective. ➢ Investigate the use of new technologies to manage private and personal information, such as automated systems for segregating or redacting (i.e., removing or obscuring) personal information.

Outputs might include lists and descriptions of records and evidence that contain personal or private information (this information should be incorporated into classification schemes); project plans and progress reports; policies and procedures; and awareness raising, orientation, and training materials.

Destination 6, Milestone 3
Our organization protects sensitive or secret information

We cannot always travel wherever we want. Some destinations are restricted, for good reason. The road may be blocked by natural hazards – active volcanoes or raging floods – or the route may pass through conflict zones, where travel could be life threatening. Sometimes access must be blocked for our own safety.

Organizations sometimes also need to block access to records and evidence. Good governance means actively sharing information with the public, but there are times when public agencies need to work in private, only releasing the information later, when it is safe. A government might reasonably restrict access to information about the location of weapons or defenses: a person's interest in knowing where military sites are right now is outweighed by the need to keep the public at large safe from potentially hostile forces. An organization might restrict information about sensitive economic negotiations until after agreements are signed; the public desire to know trade details is overshadowed by the need to guarantee all parties are able to negotiate fairly.

Security protocols include establishing **security classifications:** formal designations that indicate which records contain sensitive or protected information. Terms used might include "official," "secret," "top secret," "classified," "official use only," "confidential," or "strictly confidential." These terms are applied to different categories of record so that the organization can establish processes for protecting them from inappropriate access. (Security classifications are often added to records classification structures, which were explained in **Destination 5, Milestone 2.**) Once security classifications are applied, records might then be managed more securely, often in restricted physical or digital storage environments with limited access.

The laws governing security classifications – often given titles such as "official secrets act" or "information securities act" or similar titles – define the different types of evidence that contain information that should be protected. Even without formal legislation, organizations are wise to address security issues when considering which records may be made publicly available. Openness is a desirable goal, but restrictions are sometimes necessary.

To determine your level of progress for **Destination 6, Milestone 3,** ask the following questions:

- Does your organization have legislation or regulations in place to address government secrecy?
- Do those requirements specifically address the creation and management of records?
- Does your organization formally create and apply security classifications to records?
- How does your organization address its responsibility to ensure secrecy is protected when necessary, without limiting reasonable public access to evidence?

Think about these questions as you determine which statement best reflects your organization's current level of progress. You may wish to review relevant resources in **Part 7** first.

WHAT IS OUR ORGANIZATION'S LEVEL OF PROGRESS?

Which statement is most applicable to our organization?	Levels of Progress
Our organization does not have any legislation or regulations in place to protect sensitive or secret information and we have not taken any action to establish security classifications or to manage records or evidence so that sensitive or secret information is protected.	UNMANAGED
Our organization does not have any legislation or regulations in place to protect sensitive or secret information, but we recognize the need for security protection and have begun to plan processes and systems for addressing security needs.	EMERGING
Our organization has passed legislation and/or regulations with respect to protecting sensitive or secret information, and we have identified records and evidence that should be classified to address security needs, but we have not established consistent processes to protect records and evidence containing sensitive or secret information.	DEFINED
Our organization has passed legislation and/or regulations with respect to government secrecy, and we have formally classified records and evidence in terms of security needs; we have also established processes for managing those records to limit access.	MANAGED
Our organization has passed legislation and/or regulations with respect to government secrecy; we have formally classified records and evidence in terms of security needs; and we have also established processes for managing those records to limit access. Our processes are based on accepted standards and protocols and we formally monitor the application of security controls through regular monitoring and audits.	PROACTIVE
Not applicable – all organizations are advised to establish and maintain establish processes for managing records and evidence containing sensitive or secret information, so that security needs are respected while public access to records and evidence remains as open as possible.	NOT RELEVANT

To support this milestone, your **team** could include policy makers and legal advisors involved with determining security requirements. You may also wish to involve officials with experience managing records and evidence containing sensitive or secret information, to draw on their insights about best practice strategies to ensure security needs are respected while public access is supported whenever possible.

WHAT ACTIONS CAN OUR ORGANIZATION TAKE?

UNMANAGED EMERGING	➢ Draw on the completed records inventory (and classification schemes if they are completed) to identify records and evidence that contain sensitive or secret information. Be sure to identify the department or unit responsible, the location of records, and the information captured. (If possible, coordinate research for all milestones in **Destination 6;** the information you gather will support planning for proactive disclosure, privacy management, and the protection of sensitive or secret information.) ➢ Research security classifications and processes used by other organizations or jurisdictions. ➢ Review best-practice guidance about managing sensitive or secret information. ➢ Ask staff to identify all categories of records that contain sensitive or secret information and assess how those records are created, used, and stored.
DEFINED	➢ Develop a project plan to implement processes for identifying and managing sensitive or secret information. ➢ Establish policies, procedures, and processes for identifying and managing sensitive or secret information. ➢ Ensure these processes are consistent, policy-based, and transparent, and test them before implementation to confirm they work effectively. ➢ Develop and deliver guidance, awareness raising, and training tools to help staff perform their duties.
MANAGED	➢ Regularly review existing classification schemes and records management processes to ensure sensitive or secret information is managed appropriately; update or revise schemes and processes whenever required. ➢ Update all processes regularly, especially when functions, technologies, or processes change, so that sensitive or secret information continues to be protected no matter what technology or systems are used.
PROACTIVE	➢ Maintain and upgrade training and guidance resources regularly. ➢ Continue to monitor and audit to ensure the schemes and processes used to protect sensitive or secret information remain current and effective. ➢ Investigate the use of new technologies to manage sensitive or secret information, such as automated systems for segregating or redacting (i.e., removing or obscuring) sensitive or secret information.

Outputs might include lists and descriptions of records and evidence that contain sensitive or secret information (this information should be incorporated into classification schemes); project plans and progress reports; policies and procedures; and awareness raising, orientation, and training materials.

Destination 7: Our organization stores records appropriately and disposes of them regularly

Organizations put a lot of effort into creating records and evidence. They benefit if they put the same effort into storing evidence safely and disposing of it appropriately. How should records be kept in the office? How long do they need to be stored for reference? Which records can be destroyed? Which should be kept permanently? These are critical decisions for effective records management.

Organizations need to preserve records and evidence so that they remain authentic and usable for as long as needed. Records storage systems need to be safe, secure, and adaptable. Decisions about how long to keep records and whether they can be destroyed or kept as archives need to be based on policy, not personal preference. Determining how long to keep records – a process known as retention scheduling – helps organizations manage the flow of records strategically. Organizations can then allocate space and resources effectively, while knowing that their valuable records are safe.

Determining your organization's level of progress for each of the following milestones will help you move toward the destination of ensuring your organization **stores records appropriately** and **disposes of them regularly.**

	Milestone 1	Our organization **stores records and evidence appropriately,** regardless of form or medium.
	Milestone 2	Our organization protects records and evidence in an **emergency.**
	Milestone 3	Our organization **retains records** for as long as needed and **disposes** of records appropriately**.**
	Milestone 4	Our organization **destroys records** securely, regardless of form or medium.
	Milestone 5	Our organization **preserves** records and evidence with archival value, so they are **available** for public use.

When you have finished answering the statements for each milestone, as shown on the following pages, add your answers to the tracking tool. Then you can review your answers to determine your organization's current level of progress. Are you in the danger zones of UNMANAGED or EMERGING? Or are you in the safer zones of DEFINED, MANAGED, or PROACTIVE?

You can then turn to the guidance and suggestions to see what steps you can take to improve your organization's progress and move closer to the destination.

Destination 7, Milestone 1
Our organization stores records and evidence appropriately

Storing our car or bicycle in a covered garage helps keep the vehicle safe from rain or wind. Removing the keys and locking the vehicle when we are not using it also reduces the chance that it might be stolen or damaged. When the vehicle is damaged, we try to repair it. When it is no longer usable, we dispose of it safely. The longer our vehicle remains in good condition, the better for everyone.

Records and evidence also need to be stored and preserved. This means keeping physical/analog records in secure file cabinets or storage rooms, and it means backing up electronic records safely, so that master versions and duplicates are each safely deposited in different locations. Protecting records and evidence also means knowing how long we need to keep them and when they can be destroyed, if they are obsolete, or retained as archives, if they have enduring value to the organization or to society.

Safe storage involves more than just putting files in a cupboard. It involves more than storing electronic data on a hard drive. Records need to be identified, so they can be found again. Storage conditions need to be monitored, so that physical records can be moved into new containers if existing boxes are damaged, and electronic records can be migrated into new computer systems, if the software used to create them is about to become obsolete. If records are not protected, they can become unusable. What happens to our sources of evidence then? Even when an organization relies on commercial storage companies or computer suppliers to store its records, the organization must maintain its responsibility to ensure conditions meet or exceed best-practice requirements for storage and preservation. Otherwise, the organization does not meet its obligation to staff, citizens, or the public: to protect records and evidence so they remain authentic and accountable sources of proof of the organization's actions, transactions, and decisions. Accountability and transparency depend on access to records, now and centuries from now.

To determine your level of progress for **Destination 7, Milestone 1,** ask the following questions:

- How does your organization store physical/analog records in the office? In file cabinets, records boxes, or secure storage cupboards?
- How does your organization store electronic records in the office? In centrally managed computer systems, with regular backups and offsite storage of copies?
- Has your organization formally determined how long records should be kept and when they can be destroyed, if obsolete, or retained as archives, if they have enduring value?
- How does your organization destroy obsolete records? Does your organization preserve and make available archival records, or do you transfer them to a separate archival institution?

Think about these questions as you determine which statement best reflects your organization's current level of progress. You may wish to review relevant resources in **Part 7** first.

WHAT IS OUR ORGANIZATION'S LEVEL OF PROGRESS?

Which statement is most applicable to our organization?	**Levels of Progress**
Our organization does not control the process of storing records or other sources of evidence, regardless of form or medium. Staff decide storage arrangements independently for the records and evidence in their care, and there is no overarching organizational management.	UNMANAGED
Our organization has established basic procedures for storing certain records, such as paper/analog or electronic records but not necessarily both; our organization has not applied storage processes consistently.	EMERGING
Our organization has established basic procedures for storing all organizational records, whether paper/analog or electronic; we monitor storage conditions and processes periodically but not consistently.	DEFINED
Our organization has developed formal procedures for storing all records, in both paper/analog or electronic form; we monitor storage conditions and processes consistently and we rehouse or move records whenever needed to guarantee their safety.	MANAGED
Our organization has established formal procedures for storing all records, in both paper/analog or electronic form; we train staff in the application of the procedures; we monitor/audit storage conditions and processes regularly, and we actively rehouse or move records to different storage locations based on authorized records management policies.	PROACTIVE
Not applicable – all organizations are advised to develop and apply formal processes for storing records and evidence, regardless of form or medium, so that records remain safe and accessible.	NOT RELEVANT

To support this milestone, your **team** could include officials responsible for managing physical infrastructures such as buildings, offices, and storage spaces; facilities and equipment managers; and decision makers responsible for allocating resources for space, equipment, supplies, and information technologies. You may wish to consult with colleagues who have participated in planning records management storage and preservation services to gain insights into issues related to storing the organization's records and evidence.

WHAT ACTIONS CAN OUR ORGANIZATION TAKE?

UNMANAGED EMERGING	➢ Draw on the completed records inventory (and classification schemes if they are completed) to confirm the location of all records, both physical/analog or electronic, including office filing cabinets, storage rooms, centralized computer servers, desktop computer hard drives, and other locations. Use this information to assess the records storage conditions and determine priorities for action. ➢ Research best-practice guidance in records storage, for both physical/analog and electronic records. ➢ Based on initial research, identify and relocate high-risk records as soon as possible to store them safely until better storage arrangements are made.
DEFINED	➢ Develop a strategic plan for improving storage conditions for both physical/analog and electronic records consistently, with phased improvements as needed. ➢ Review the plan with senior managers to obtain their support. ➢ Develop or expand storage conditions and management processes in keeping with the strategic plan. ➢ Maintain current information about the location of all records, to support ongoing management and effective protection in an emergency (as discussed in **Destination 7, Milestone 2**). ➢ Establish a regular monitoring program to assess storage conditions over time.
MANAGED	➢ Regularly review processes for transferring and storing records and evidence storage procedures and conditions, as part of a monitoring and auditing program, to ensure processes are consistent and comprehensive. ➢ Identify long-term storage needs in keeping with retention and disposal decisions discussed as part of **Destination 7, Milestone 3**, to support records management planning and budgeting.
PROACTIVE	➢ Keep senior managers actively aware of current storage conditions and priorities and solicit support whenever improvements or changes are needed. ➢ Work closely with senior managers to identify any new approaches or changes to records management operations, including changes in technologies, physical conditions, or legal or regulatory requirements affecting records and evidence, to ensure new or different priorities can be incorporated into strategic plans.

Outputs might include location information for all records and evidence; a strategic plan for managing storage locations, equipment, and processes; project plans and progress reports; policies and procedures; tracking tools to monitor the location and movement of records and evidence while in use or when being transferred or disposed of; monitoring reports on storage conditions, identifying risks and concerns; and awareness raising, orientation, and training materials.

Destination 7, Milestone 2
Our organization protects records and evidence in an emergency

Imagine: you are driving down the road and suddenly your vehicle is hit from the side. Are you injured? Can your vehicle be repaired? If you are wearing a safety belt, and your vehicle has a solid frame and functioning air bags, you will probably escape without injury. But if your vehicle is in a poor state and is not equipped with seat belts, your chances of injury are much higher. Your outcome is linked to how ready you were to face an emergency. No one wishes for an emergency, but we do need to be prepared.

Organizations also need to prepare plan for emergencies. How can your organization protect staff, buildings, equipment, and records and evidence? Ideally, your organization will have developed an emergency plan, to deal with anticipated disasters, whether they are dramatic – an earthquake, fire, or tsunami – or less severe but equally important – a flood in the storage room or a computer virus that infects office servers?

What about a health emergency that means many members of your staff need to work from home? Can they access the records and information they need to do their jobs? Emergency planning should address every possible circumstance, from military attacks to water leaks to pandemics. These plans need to identify how you will protect records and evidence and make them available as soon as possible, so the organization can keep operating. An emergency plan is also known as a business continuity plan, a business resumption plan, or a disaster management plan. No matter what the plan is called, its main purpose is to identify key actions the organization will take to prepare for, reduce the impact of, and recover from an emergency.

An emergency plan identifies **vital records**, such as property and title documents; records confirming ownership of equipment or facilities; important legal agreements; lists of the names, addresses, and contact information for staff members; and so on. The plan outlines processes for protecting these vital records so they are accessible in an emergency, allowing organizations to resume business very quickly, even if staff cannot return to the office right away.

To determine your level of progress for **Destination 7, Milestone 2,** ask the following questions:

- Has your organization ever experienced an emergency?
- Can you access documentation about that event to help you develop your emergency plan?
- Has your organization ever developed an emergency response plan for records management?
- Has your organization ever identified vital records?
- Do you have a plan in place for protecting evidence the organization will need in an emergency?

Think about these questions as you determine which statement best reflects your organization's current level of progress. You may wish to review relevant resources in **Part 7** first.

WHAT IS OUR ORGANIZATION'S LEVEL OF PROGRESS?

Which statement is most applicable to our organization?	Levels of Progress
Our organization does not have any plan in place to address organizational emergencies of any kind, and we have not identified or protected vital records, so they are available after an emergency.	UNMANAGED
Our organization has established response plans to address organizational emergencies, but these plans do not specifically address records management issues, and the plans do not identify vital records or describe processes for protecting records that might be needed after an emergency.	EMERGING
Our organization intends to develop emergency response plans to address records requirements, and we have begun to identify key vital records, but we have not yet implemented an emergency response program that addresses records management requirements.	DEFINED
Our organization has developed emergency response plans to address records management requirements, including the identification of vital records; we have not tested or reviewed these plans at least once; and we have oriented selected staff to their responsibilities as identified in emergency response plans.	MANAGED
Our organization has developed and maintains formal emergency response plans for records and evidence; the plans identify vital records and incorporate guidance about their care and protection; we test those plans regularly; we train staff in their roles and responsibilities; and we update plans whenever required.	PROACTIVE
Not applicable – all organizations are advised to develop, test, maintain, and update emergency response plans, and train staff in their roles and responsibilities, to ensure records and evidence, including vital records, are protected from harm.	NOT RELEVANT

To support this milestone, your **team** could include officials responsible for managing physical infrastructures such as buildings, offices, and storage spaces, as well as any decision makers responsible emergency management. You may also consult first responders in your jurisdiction, such as police or fire officials, to solicit advice about weaknesses, risks, or threats to your organization and steps you can take to protect records and evidence – as well as staff, facilities, and the public – in the event of an emergency.

WHAT ACTIONS CAN OUR ORGANIZATION TAKE?

UNMANAGED EMERGING	➢ Research previous emergencies affecting your jurisdiction – from basement floods to earthquakes – and gather documentation to support emergency planning. ➢ Research best practice processes for identifying and protecting vital records and establishing emergency plans for records and evidence management. ➢ Identify current hazards and risks to records and evidence and seek the resources and support needed to reduce those risks – such as moving paper/analog records to more secure storage or upgrading computer servers so they are more robust. ➢ Secure senior management support for the development of an emergency plan and for the identification and protection of vital records, so these tools will be implemented immediately in an emergency.
DEFINED	➢ Identify vital records: the sources of evidence your organization needs to access in an emergency. Solicit input from senior managers and staff across the organization on their priorities for vital records. (Remember that everyone will deem "their" records vital, even though "true" vital records are a small subset of all evidence.) ➢ Draft an emergency response plan for records management, including identification of immediate actions, supplies, equipment, and staff responsibilities. ➢ Draft a vital records management plan, including priorities for protection, such as storing physical or digital copies offsite or keeping records in secure storage. ➢ Be sure to test all plans at least once and revise processes before finalizing them. ➢ Once the plans have been finalized, train all staff in their use.
MANAGED	➢ Test and update all plans at least once a year, so they remain current and usable. Update plans any time something significant changes – such as the when records are moved, computer servers are upgraded, or environmental conditions change. ➢ Review the status of vital records annually, or more often as needed, to ensure they are identified accurately and remain adequately protected and accessible.
PROACTIVE	➢ Continue to seek improvements in records management conditions, including facilities and resources, to minimize potential hazards and improve the safety and security of records and evidence. ➢ Consider sharing a summary of your emergency plan – with sensitive details removed to protect privacy and maintain security – so that other organizations can benefit from your knowledge and experience.

Outputs might include location information for all records and evidence; a strategic plan for emergency management; project plans and progress reports; policies and procedures; emergency and vital records management plans, including lists of vital records; test results; lists of emergency equipment; environmental and hazard monitoring reports; and awareness raising, orientation, and training materials.

Destination 7, Milestone 3
Our organization retains and disposes of records and evidence appropriately

Cars and bicycles and trains do not last forever. After a while, our vehicles can become too expensive to maintain, or they may be superseded by a newer model. Normally, we replace older cars or motor scooters or bicycles with newer ones. But we maintain our vehicles well, and they are still useful to us, we could keep using them for decades.

Records management is like acquiring and maintaining vehicle. The more effectively we manage records from the start, the more useful they will be later. And when we finally do not need those records any more – a year or a century from now – we can then decide their **disposition.** The disposition process involves two questions. First, does our organization still need the record for business use? Second, does the record have value to the public at large, which means it should be kept for as long as needed to support accountability and transparency? Disposal is documented in two separate policy tools: the retention schedule and the disposal authority. (The two documents are sometimes combined into one.)

> A **retention schedule** indicates how long a record is kept in the office and in storage; and whether the record can be destroyed or should be kept permanently.
>
> A **disposal authority** confirms that a set of records may be destroyed or transferred to archival custody or care. The authority confirms both the decision and the disposal action itself.

Note: retention schedules may be overruled temporarily if the organization is bound by a "legal hold," which may restrict the disposal of selected records if they are needed as evidence for pending litigation.

It is useful to document actual disposal actions fully, to confirm that the organization destroyed or transferred X records on Y date using Z process. This documentation allows the organization to remain accountable not just for the evidence it keeps but also for the evidence it removes.

To determine your level of progress for **Destination 7, Milestone 3,** ask the following questions:

- Has your organization formally defined how long records should be kept and whether and when should be disposed of, as obsolete or archival?
- Do these decisions apply to both paper/analog and electronic records?
- Does your organization document the actual disposal of records, whether by destruction or transfer to archival custody or control?

Think about these questions as you determine which statement best reflects your organization's current level of progress. You may wish to review relevant resources in **Part 7** first.

WHAT IS OUR ORGANIZATION'S LEVEL OF PROGRESS?

Which statement is most applicable to our organization?	**Levels of Progress**
Our organization has not established any processes or controls for identifying which records may be retained or destroyed. The organization either lets staff decide for themselves which records to keep and for how long, or the organization has never destroyed or moved records and keeps all records in paper/analog or electronic storage systems.	UNMANAGED
Our organization selects certain records for disposal on an ad hoc basis, primarily to destroy obsolete records; our decision-making processes are not formalized, nor are they applied consistently; the destruction or transfer of records is not documented.	EMERGING
Our organization has established basic procedures for selecting certain records to be disposed of as obsolete or as archival, but we have not applied these processes consistently. We do not monitor storage conditions or disposal processes and we do not document disposal actions.	DEFINED
Our organization has developed formal procedures for determining retention periods and disposal decisions, for records in both paper/analog or electronic form; our organization monitors and documents actual disposal actions consistently.	MANAGED
Our organization has established formal procedures for determining retention periods and disposal decisions, for records in both paper/analog or electronic form; we document actual disposal actions consistently; we train staff to dispose of records based on policy; we monitor actions regularly; and we update retention schedules as needed.	PROACTIVE
Not applicable – all organizations are advised to develop and apply formal criteria for records retention and disposal, including retention schedules and disposal authorities; to train staff in their use; and to monitor actions and update or change processes whenever required.	NOT RELEVANT

To support this milestone, your **team** could include policy makers and legal advisors involved with determining legal or organizational requirements for making and keeping records, to identify legal retention requirements. You may also wish to involve officials with experience responding to litigation, who can help identify best practice methods for managing records and evidence, so they are available to meet legal requirements.

WHAT ACTIONS CAN OUR ORGANIZATION TAKE?

UNMANAGED	➢ Draw on the completed records inventory (and classification schemes if they are completed) to identify the different classes of records across the organization. If you have not yet developed a records inventory and classification schemes, or both tools are out of date, prioritize work to revise them. The inventory forms the basis for classification, and classification forms the basis for retention scheduling. ➢ Review best-practice guidance about how to develop effective and sustainable records retention schedules and disposal authorities. ➢ Research retention schedules for other organizations or jurisdictions. ➢ Research legislative, regulatory, policy, and organizational requirements for records, to help you define how long records need to be kept and whether and when they should be destroyed or need to be retained for their archival value. ➢ Ask staff for guidance about the time frames they follow to retain records for legal or administrative reasons.
EMERGING	
DEFINED	➢ Formalize retention schedules for different categories of records; your goal is eventually to develop schedules for all records across the organization. ➢ Review draft schedules with senior managers to confirm retention and disposal recommendations and obtain formal authorization for decisions. ➢ Develop disposal authority tools to support the consistent disposal of records. ➢ Develop a project plan to implement retention schedules and disposal authorities in a strategic manner. ➢ Develop and deliver guidance and training resources to help staff use retention schedules and disposal authorities easily.
MANAGED	➢ Regularly review retention schedules as part of a formal monitoring and auditing plan, to ensure the schedules remain current and effective. ➢ Update or revise retention schedules whenever the organization's functions, or records-related technologies and processes change, to ensure the schedules reflect current conditions.
PROACTIVE	➢ Maintain and update training and guidance resources regularly. ➢ Maintain and update monitoring and auditing processes regularly. ➢ Investigate the use of new or different technologies to support retention and disposal, such as automated systems for identifying when records have reached the end of their life cycle.

Outputs might include location information for all records and evidence; project plans and progress reports; retention schedules for all organizational records; completed and approved disposal authorities; policies and procedures; and awareness raising, orientation, and training materials.

Destination 7, Milestone 4
Our organization destroys records and evidence securely

How many of us have driven past a junkyard filled with old, wrecked cars and buses? It is unsightly, and, worse, it can pose a health hazard. It is more efficient to destroy old vehicles safely, either by recycling the different parts or by crushing the vehicles so that the components can be made into something new.

Filling storage rooms or landfills with old, unwanted records is also unsightly and can be even more hazardous. Records can contain personal or sensitive information such as personal medical information, government secrets, sensitive organizational plans, or other evidence. These records need to be destroyed safely when the have reached the end of their life cycle (or, as discussed in **Destination 7, Milestone 5,** retained permanently if they have enduring value). A "junkyard" for organizational records is a bad idea!

The processes used to destroy obsolete records need to be secure, complete, and irreversible. The content of records needs to be destroyed completely before the paper or other medium they are written on is recycled or reused. Recycling or reusing paper brings environmental benefits, but those are outweighed by the risks to security and privacy. But burning records, while sure to destroy evidence completely, is bad for our health and the environment. Ideal destruction processes are outlined below.

> For **non-sensitive paper/analog records** (records not classified as top secret, classified, etc.), shred records so that they cannot be put back together again. Ideally, the shredded paper would then be macerated to produce a pulp.
>
> For **sensitive paper/analog records,** which have been classified, pulping is best. The goal is to ensure the contents are irretrievably destroyed.
>
> For **electronic records,** delete the content by deleting the documents from the computer drive or storage device *then* wiping the carrier clean so no residual content is left. (We may think we have "deleted" something from our computers but unless we also erase everything completely from actual storage devices, we may not have achieved full destruction.)

Ideally, a representative of the organization should witness the destruction process. Destruction should be documented in disposal authorities, and the actual destruction should be confirmed in writing, with that record kept as evidence, to allow the organization to be accountable for its disposal decisions.

To determine your level of progress for **Destination 7, Milestone 4,** ask the following questions:

- How does your organization destroy paper/analog or electronic records?
- Is the process formalized and documented or is it uncontrolled and undocumented?

Think about these questions as you determine which statement best reflects your organization's current level of progress. You may wish to review relevant resources in **Part 7** first.

WHAT IS OUR ORGANIZATION'S LEVEL OF PROGRESS?

Which statement is most applicable to our organization?	**Levels of Progress**
Our organization has not established any processes or controls for destroying records. The organization either lets staff decide for themselves which records to destroy, or the organization has never destroyed or moved records and keeps all records in paper/analog or electronic storage systems.	UNMANAGED
Our organization selects certain records for destruction on an ad hoc basis; our destruction processes are not formalized, nor are they applied consistently; the destruction of records is not documented.	EMERGING
Our organization has established basic procedures for selecting certain records for destruction, but we have not applied these processes consistently. We do not monitor or document destruction.	DEFINED
Our organization has developed formal procedures for determining which records to destroy, for records in both paper/analog or electronic form; our organization monitors and documents actual destruction actions consistently.	MANAGED
Our organization has established formal procedures for determining which records to destroy, for records in both paper/analog or electronic form; we document actual destruction actions consistently; we train staff to select records for destruction based on policy; we monitor actions regularly; and we update disposal authorities and destruction documentation as needed.	PROACTIVE
Not applicable – all organizations are advised to develop and apply formal criteria and processes for destroying records, based on records retention schedules, and to train staff in their use and monitor actions and update or change processes whenever required.	NOT RELEVANT

To support this milestone, your **team** could include policy makers and legal advisors involved with determining legal or organizational requirements for making and keeping records, to identify legal requirements for executing and documenting destruction actions. You may also wish to involve officials with experience in managing waste and disposal services for the organization, who can help identify best practice methods for destroying records and evidence completely while addressing environmental and health concerns.

WHAT ACTIONS CAN OUR ORGANIZATION TAKE?

UNMANAGED EMERGING	➢ Review your organization's retention schedules to identify those records identified for destruction. ➢ Review best-practice guidance about destruction processes and determine how your organization can institute comparable processes. ➢ Confirm legally acceptable destruction processes, such as pulping, and confirm those requirements in all guidance, policies, and procedures so they are adhered to consistently. ➢ Consult with staff across the organization to raise awareness of the importance of destroying records only according to establish criteria and formal policies; if necessary, institute a "stop" order to prevent unauthorized destruction.
DEFINED	➢ Develop a project plan to establish consistent processes for destroying records, including processes for overseeing and documenting all destruction actions for records and evidence in all forms. ➢ Ensure these processes are consistent, policy-based, and transparent, and test them before implementation to confirm they work effectively. ➢ Develop and deliver guidance and training tools to help staff perform their duties effectively, especially staff with authority to destroy records as well as staff who may identify records to be destroyed but not execute destruction actions.
MANAGED	➢ Continue to review destruction processes as part of a regular monitoring and auditing process; update or revise processes or documentation whenever required. ➢ Update processes whenever the organization's functions or technologies change, so that destruction remains effective, efficient, and complete.
PROACTIVE	➢ Maintain and upgrade training and guidance resources regularly. ➢ Continue to monitor and audit processes to ensure records destruction remains effective, complete, and fully documented. ➢ Investigate the use of new technologies or processes for destroying records, no matter their form or medium, so that the organization can comply with essential requirements for secure and complete destruction while ensuring processes are as environmentally sustainable as possible.

Outputs might include project plans and progress reports; disposal authorities; documentation of actual destruction, along with authorization records as appropriate; and awareness raising, orientation, and training material.

Destination 7, Milestone 5
Our organization preserves records and evidence with archival value, so they are available for public use

Some vehicles are worth keeping permanently. They may continue to be useful forms of transportation, or they may be evidence of travel in the past. If we have invested in building a high-quality, well-made train system, we do not want to see it fall into ruin. If we own an original Model T car from the 1920s, we might invest considerable time and money to preserve it.

Some records are also worth keeping permanently. They serve as evidence of significant actions or decisions, or they provide insight into past events. Even if we do not refer to them daily, they help us understand our past. Only a small portion of an organization's records have enduring value, but that portion should be protected so it remains authentic and accessible proof for today and the future.

> **Archives** are the small portion of an organization's (or individual's) records and evidence that are worth retaining permanently because they contain enduring value as evidence of and information about activities and events.

In many jurisdictions, archives are acquired and preserved by a formally established archival agency, such as a national or state archival institution. In other cases, the organization that created the records may decide to preserve them itself. But just storing records in a vault is not the same as protecting them as archives. Archives need to be preserved so they are authentic and usable, and they need to be publicly available. People use archives to understand the actions or decisions of governments, organizations, individuals, or groups. Archives are essential sources of proof that support accountability and transparency, illuminate history, and serve as a source of individual and shared memory.

Today, archives include both physical/analog records and electronic records. An organization needs to take steps to protect not just "traditional" archives but also digital records. **Digital preservation,** the process of managing electronic files and items so they can be accessed and used by anyone in the future, is an important part of archival management in the 21st century.

To determine your level of progress for **Destination 7, Milestone 5,** ask the following questions:

- Does your organization identify some of its records or evidence as archival? Do you identify both paper/analog and electronic records?
- Does your organization preserve those records as archives or transfer them to a separate archival agency? If not, how do you manage and protect records that have permanent value?

Think about these questions as you determine which statement best reflects your organization's current level of progress. You may wish to review relevant resources in **Part 7** first.

WHAT IS OUR ORGANIZATION'S LEVEL OF PROGRESS?

Which statement is most applicable to our organization?	**Levels of Progress**
Our organization has not established any processes or controls for identifying and preserving archives. The organization either lets staff decide for themselves which records to keep, or the organization has never identified any records as having archival value.	UNMANAGED
Our organization selects certain records for preservation as archives on an ad hoc basis; our selection processes are not formalized, nor are they applied consistently. Our organization has not taken formal action to preserve archives ourselves or transfer them to the custody or control of an archival agency.	EMERGING
Our organization has established basic procedures for selecting certain records for archival preservation, but we have not applied these processes consistently.	DEFINED
Our organization has established criteria for identifying records with archival value, and we have either preserved those records ourselves or transferred them to the custody or control of an archival agency. However, we identify and preserve archives consistently and we do not monitor or audit our processes.	MANAGED
Our organization has established formal procedures for determining which records have archival value, for records in both paper/analog or electronic form; we regularly preserve archives ourselves or transfer them to the custody or control of an archival agency; we train staff to protect archives from the point of creation; and we monitor or audit processes consistently.	PROACTIVE
Not applicable – all organizations are advised to develop and apply formal criteria for identifying records with archival value and clear processes either for preserving archives themselves or for transferring archives to the custody or control of an archival agency.	NOT RELEVANT

To support this milestone, your **team** could include policy makers and legal advisors involved with identifying the organization's responsibilities for public accountability, to identify records to keep for their enduring value. Your team could also benefit from inputs from representatives of national or state archival institutions, who can advise on how to determine which records have enduring value and which processes to follow to ensure these archives are preserved safely, whether by your organization or by an allied agency.

WHAT ACTIONS CAN OUR ORGANIZATION TAKE?

UNMANAGED EMERGING	➢ Identify the appropriate archival institution for your government or organization and gather information about their operations. (See **Destination 1, Milestone 4.**) ➢ Meet with representatives of this agency to outline current records management activities and discuss ways to collaborate to support archival preservation. ➢ In the absence of a separate agency, research comparable activities in other jurisdictions to understand their scope of services to determine strategies for preserving your organization's archives, whatever their form or medium. ➢ Discuss options with senior managers for preserving and making available your organization's archives and develop a strategic plan for preserving them yourself or transferring them to the custody or control of an archival agency.
DEFINED	➢ Formalize your organization's plans either for creating your own archival program or for transferring archives into separate custody or control. ➢ If you choose to preserve archives yourself, establish policies, procedures, and processes to ensure this work is carried out according to best-practice principles. ➢ If you choose to transfer archives to a separate agency, confirm a formal agreement outlining the terms and conditions of the relationship.
MANAGED	➢ Whether you transfer archives to a separate agency or manage them yourself, establish formal monitoring and auditing procedures to ensure archival activities are executed appropriately and consistently. ➢ Continue to monitor and audit archives activities and maintain and update procedures, including staff training and guidance.
PROACTIVE	➢ Pursue projects with the archival agency to support archival access or develop your own initiatives to promote your services and share your archival holdings. ➢ Share your experiences with senior managers to foster awareness of archives. ➢ Share your experiences with colleagues from other agencies, to raise awareness.
NOT RELEVANT	➢ If no appropriate archival agency exists, you may need to establish your own operations; see the resources in the *Roadmap* for advice about where to start.

Outputs might include project plans and progress reports; documentation confirming preservation decisions or transfers of archives to separate custody or control; lists of archives (normally incorporated into classification schemes and retention schedules); policies and procedures; and awareness raising, orientation, and training materials. Note: if you develop your own archival operations, you will need to produce outputs to support that work, from strategic and project plans to policies and procedures and awareness and orientation materials.