



Question:

Who should be on the information governance steering committee and what are this group's primary responsibilities?

Answer:

The information governance (IG) steering committee, or IG *team*, as it's referred to in *Information Governance Body of Knowledge (IGBOK): The Foundation*, is composed of professionals with comprehensive skills from each of the IG stakeholder groups represented in the Information Governance Core Concepts graphic on page 43.

Information management (IM) is the hub around which IG operates; the remaining stakeholder groups, represented by the mid-sized gears, are IT, legal, risk/compliance, privacy, security, and business units. Each of these stakeholder groups has unique areas of accountabilities and skills that are critical to a successful IG program.

IG Team Members' Primary Roles

Team members must have the strategic perspective and the expertise needed to help their organizations leverage their information assets for maximum value while reducing the costs and risks associated with using and governing these assets. To do this, they must understand the disciplines of the IG stakeholder groups to create and implement an effective IG framework comprising policies, procedures, training, auditing, and quality improvement initiatives.

Depending on the organization, there may not be a single person or a single group for each stakeholder group named above. But, *IGBOK: The Foundation* says, the perspective and skill set for each each of the following stakeholder roles should be represented on the IG team.

IM's Primary Roles

- Develops and documents the IM program
- Facilitates information availability
- Ensures information protection
- Develops the information retention and disposition program
- Assesses information risk
- Audits the IM program

Legal's Primary Roles

- Ensures legal, regulatory compliance
- Supports litigation

IT's Primary Roles

- Owns the tools [hardware and software], executes the rules [policies]
- Aligns technology with organizational goals

Security's Primary Roles

- Ensures information confidentiality, integrity, availability
- Applies protection according to information classification
- Secures digital assets
- Secures physical assets

Privacy's Primary Roles

- Identifies information privacy requirements
- Ensures proper information security and protection
- Defines breach notification responsibilities

Risk/Compliance's Primary Roles

- Assesses information risks
- Ensures compliance with information requirements

See *IGBOK: The Foundation* for details about each of these roles. This overview of IG is available for free download to ARMA International's professional members at <https://www.arma.org/store/ViewProduct.aspx?id=10798188>.

IG Team's Collaborative Roles

Though each of the stakeholders has the primary roles listed above – and some of these roles above appear under more than one stakeholder – the team functions collaboratively to ensure a successful program. William Saffady explains this in *IG Concepts, Requirements, Technologies*:

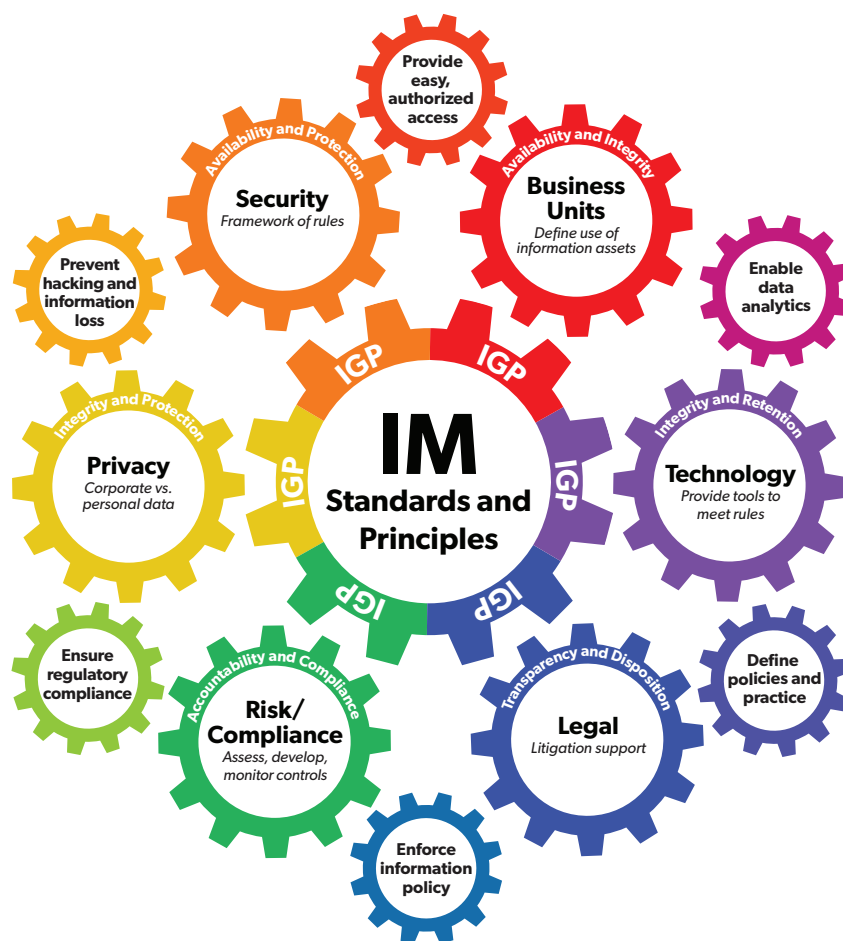
“While individual stakeholders (or business units) understandably focus on their own responsibilities and operations,” Saffady writes, “information governance takes a broader view. An information governance program must assess the organizational impact of local actions and balance the competing agendas of individual stakeholders to achieve results that are in the common interest.”

Saffady writes that team members – which he refers to as the *IG structure* – “collectively address the core issues and concerns of IG: 1) managing the information lifecycle; 2) making information accessible and


usable; 3) safeguarding information assets; 4) ensuring compliance with information-related legal and regulatory requirements; and 5) addressing information-related risks.”

More specifically, Saffady summarizes the team's collaborative functions, writing that it:

- Defines the structure of an organization's information-related initiatives
- Develops high-level strategies, policies, and processes to support an organization's objectives and provides oversight of their implementation
- Identifies stakeholders and defines their roles and responsibilities
- Promotes interaction, cooperation, and consultation among stakeholders
- Encourages dialogue, synergies, and consensus-building to balance the competing agendas of individual stakeholders, resolve conflicts, and achieve results that are in the common interest
- Coexists and interacts with other governance initiatives that deal with specific information-related matters or that have an impact on an organization's information-related policies and practices (e.g., data governance, project governance, innovation governance)



ARMA International's Information Governance Core Concepts.

For a thorough exploration of this topic and much more information about IG, order *IG Concepts, Requirements, Technologies* at <https://www.arma.org/store/ViewProduct.aspx?id=10563807>. 

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