

AN ENLIGHTENED WHITE PAPER



INFORMATION GOVERNANCE: A KEY FOUNDATION FOR EFFECTIVE AND SECURE INFORMATION SHARING

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1.0 ABSTRACT

When two or more agencies or system silos¹ are attempting to share data, an effective and secure method must be devised for managing information while still allowing for the convenient sharing of information. In addition, government agencies must remain in compliance with various federal protocols. The first step towards effective information sharing is through Information Governance (IG).

This white paper will validate why the existence of a sound framework for information governance is essential to secure information sharing whether it's between two partners or through multiple agencies. While detailing common needs, this paper will also expand on the solutions for excellence in IG. Successful IG Framework solutions consider the extensive knowledge of current laws and mandates and streamlines them with the agency's vision of collaboration to create results that impact all stakeholders.

¹ *System Silos: Independent non- integrated information management systems within the ENTERPRISE that hold vast amount of enterprise information and data*

2.0 BUSINESS CHALLENGE

Over the years in many law enforcement communities, various case management systems have been built to collect and process information and data. As these different system silos¹ exist, the need to bridge and exchange information between them is essential. To combat crime and protect the nation from threats, it has become extremely important for different Law Enforcement agencies to share mission critical information within their jurisdiction, with neighboring states, and at the federal level. As different agencies mature and move toward this new era of information sharing there are some critical concerns that need to be addressed.

For Example:

- What are the policies and procedures that an agency needs to facilitate for secure information sharing?
- How do agencies begin to share the information without having concerns that data will be accessed by unauthorized agencies and users?
- What are the controls and access level policies that an agency needs to setup? Is this an agency's responsibility? What is the first step?
- Can a current agency system support information sharing?
- What organizational structure does an agency need to implement policies and procedures?
- Can the agency trust a central organization to bring other trusted agencies together to share and collaborate with information?
- Will the collaborating agencies believe that their agency's data will be securely shared and not compromised?
- Will the agency/inter-agency parties come to trust policies and procedures needed for the sharing of information?

Whether its a local agency considering the establishment of information sharing with a single partner or an agency responsible for bringing multiple agencies together, these concerns exist at all levels and can be handled by having a sound framework for **Information Governance (IG)**.

3.0 SOLUTION DESCRIPTION

IG: The first step towards effective information sharing

It is not uncommon to have a Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) between two law enforcement agencies trying to share information. In most of these cases, the information or the data elements that an agency decides to share with the agency partners is approved by the agency's general counsel or their designated legal authority. Service Level Agreements (SLAs) are put in place to regulate systems and their availability. As system silos are opened to each other for communication, it is of paramount importance that information is effectively managed and that appropriate policies, procedures and management accountability structures exist to provide a robust governance framework for information management.

At its core, IG in Law Enforcement information sharing is about implementing and managing common policies, procedures, and controls across various system silos participating in collaboration.

For example, a local criminal justice coordinating agency will be responsible for conceiving, developing, implementing, and maintaining the IG for multiple agencies to successfully participate in information sharing. The IG framework processes will protect, secure, and regulate the information being shared by agencies therefore reducing the learning curve for each agency.

Whether an agency consisting of multiple partners or two related agencies are trying to share data, agencies are looking for systematic ways to manage their information. One way that can be achieved is by adopting an **Information Governance Framework (IGF)**.

IGF is the way an agency handles, uses, and manages its information in an efficient, effective and secure manner to comply with all appropriate ethical, legal and quality standards. It brings together all the requirements, standards and best practices that apply to the management of information while participating in information collaboration. IGF also helps the agency assess how well it is managing the information it creates and shares.

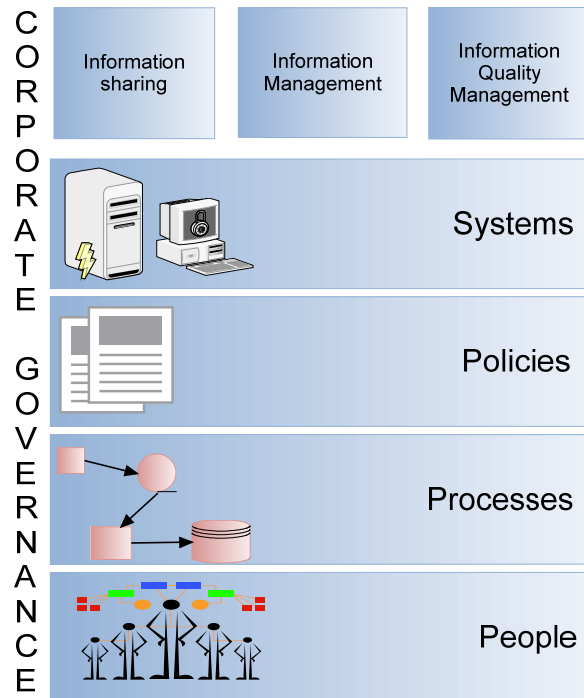
4.0 SOLUTION BENEFITS

Information Governance Framework (IGF): A Four Legged Approach

Law Enforcement faces unique challenges when it comes to setting up an IGF for information sharing. For example, multiple identities exist in multiple case management systems for an offender/defendant. As the information is shared, it is extremely difficult to have identities consolidated and reconciled if there are no common policies and procedures for duplicate identities. Such unique law enforcement challenges mandate that agencies consider and adopt a proven and sound IGF while implementing information sharing.

Based on past success in devising, implementing, and managing corporate information technology infrastructure and information governance for various federal and local agencies, it has been determined that a four legged approach towards its IGF is most effective. A successfully implemented IGF encompasses **people, processes, policies, and systems**. All four areas need to be addressed to conduct efficient information sharing. People follow processes; processes are modeled around policies, and processes and policies must be managed by systems. Currently, a successful implementation of an IGF modeled around those four essentials exists in the District of Columbia where the challenges are monumental for data sharing due to the co-existence and simultaneous participation by local and federal agencies in the criminal justice process.

Figure 1.0 below shows the IGF model at the enterprise level.



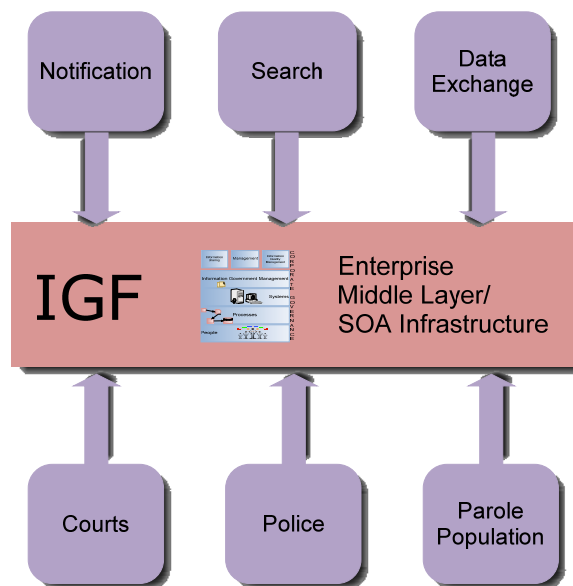
As part of the framework, innovative templates for Standard Operating Procedures, Service Level Agreements, MOU's, and standardized guidelines in the law enforcement domain exist for regions that want to accelerate their information sharing process. These templates are modeled around:

- **Holding** law enforcement information securely and confidentially
- **Obtaining** law enforcement information fairly and efficiently
- **Recording** law enforcement information accurately and reliably
- **Using** law enforcement information effectively and ethically
- **Sharing** law enforcement information appropriately and lawfully

The goal of an IGF is to build a compliance and governance architecture that provides proactive controls for information and records – which document the agency's business actions and decisions. Most importantly, IGF policies and procedures are further modeled around the mandate and standards (quality, privacy, and data exchange-National Information Exchange Model-NIEM) set by the Office of Justice Programs (OJP) and Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) under the leadership of Department of Justice (DOJ).

Implementation of an IGF provides an integrated approach to the processing and sharing of information. By centralizing policy enforcement for all information-based applications, an IGF streamlines the ability of agencies to proactively stay in compliance with their operating policies, thereby successfully achieving their legal and regulatory responsibilities. For example, the Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA) requires federal agencies to develop, document and implement agency-wide information security programs to protect the confidentiality, integrity and availability of information that support the operations and assets of the agency. Compliance is not only a good idea, it's the law. An IGF allows agencies to achieve this compliance.

Figure 2.0 below shows enterprise level coupling of IGF with SOA.



By integrating policy enforcement and management into enterprise systems like Light Weight Data Access Protocol (LDAP) or/and in Service Oriented Architecture (SOA) - Enterprise Service Bus (ESB), agencies can develop and enforce a single set of compliance and business policies across all enterprise activities and processes to ensure that information technology supports the agency's business goals. An IGF coupled with SOA infrastructure identifies and controls actual business process flows, helps agencies to automatically adjust to changes, and visually traces the root causes of policy violations where and when they occur.

5.0 CONCLUSION

In law enforcement, no two agencies or jurisdictions (states) are the same when it comes to information sharing. Different state laws coupled with new federal and local mandates and an ever increasing requirement for compliance requires a proven, tested, and successful IGF strategy. A well developed and comprehensive IGF is a must for information sharing initiatives.

6.0 COMPANY INFORMATION

Enlightened, Inc. is a full-service Information Technology (IT) consulting firm that helps our clients solve complex business problems by leveraging technology. We are committed to offering our clients the tools and processes necessary to build a winning Information Governance Framework Strategy.

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