



**Australian Government**  
**Australian Pesticides and  
Veterinary Medicines Authority**



**INFORMATION MANAGEMENT (IM)  
AND  
INFORMATION & COMMUNICATIONS  
TECHNOLOGY (ICT)**

**STRATEGIC PLAN 2012-15**

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# 1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

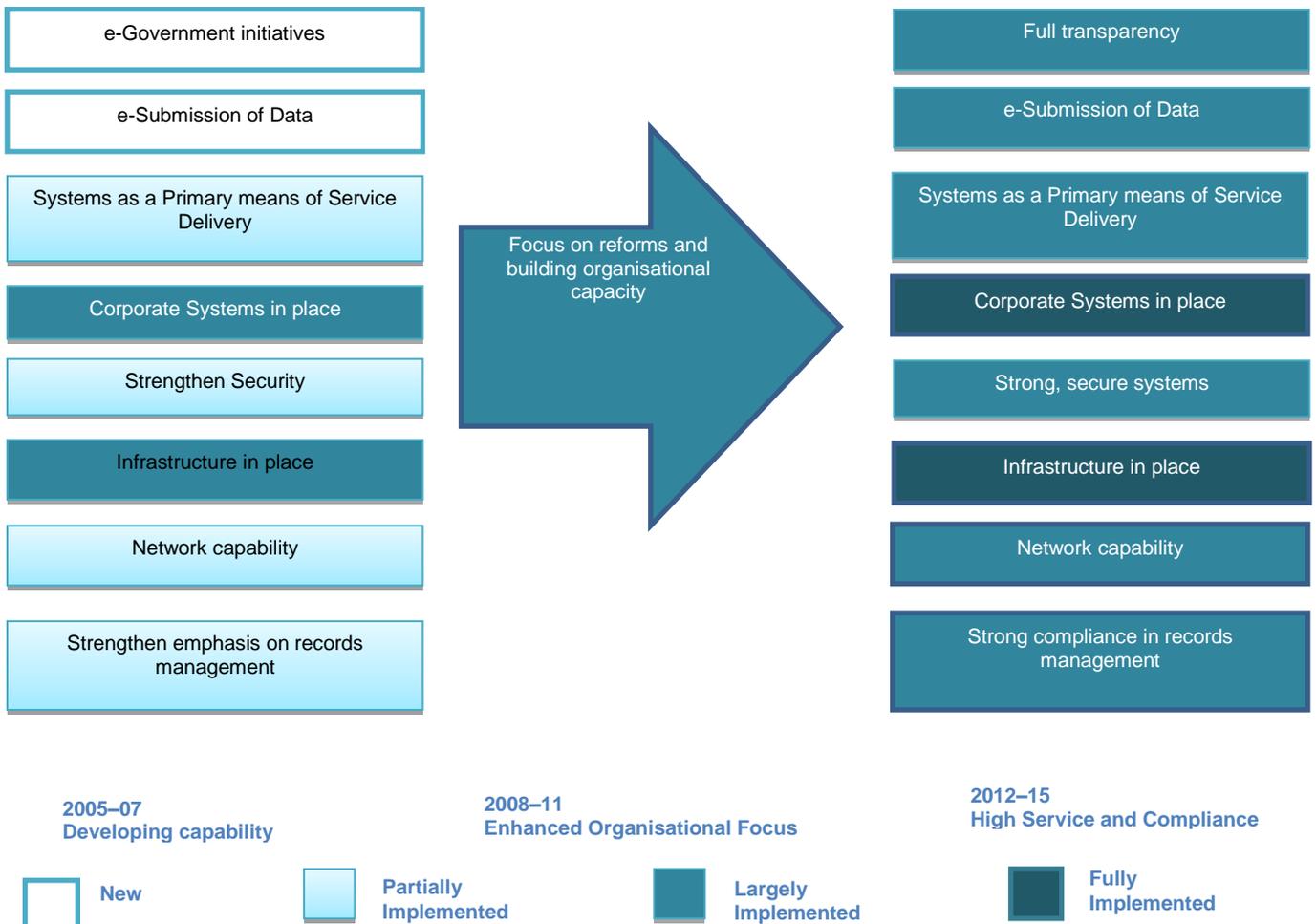
This plan is a road map to guide the direction of effort in Information and Communications Technology (ICT) for the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) to ensure continued support of corporate objectives. It also seeks to outline how ICT will meet the future business needs of the APVMA.

The plan is largely focused on outlining ICT priorities flowing from the Implementation of the Better Regulation of Agriculture and Veterinary Chemicals (the Reform Agenda).

This plan defines the ICT strategies and projects that will consolidate and extend the business systems supporting the APVMA’s core processes over the next three years.

The previous IT strategic plan focussed on establishing a platform for overall operations and defining technology progression for the agency. Many of the projects from that plan have been implemented or progressed in line with corporate strategies and a number of improvements and enhancements have seen the business systems at the APVMA held in high regard by stakeholders. Diagram 1 below shows the progression of strategic directives in APVMA.

Diagram 1: strategic directions



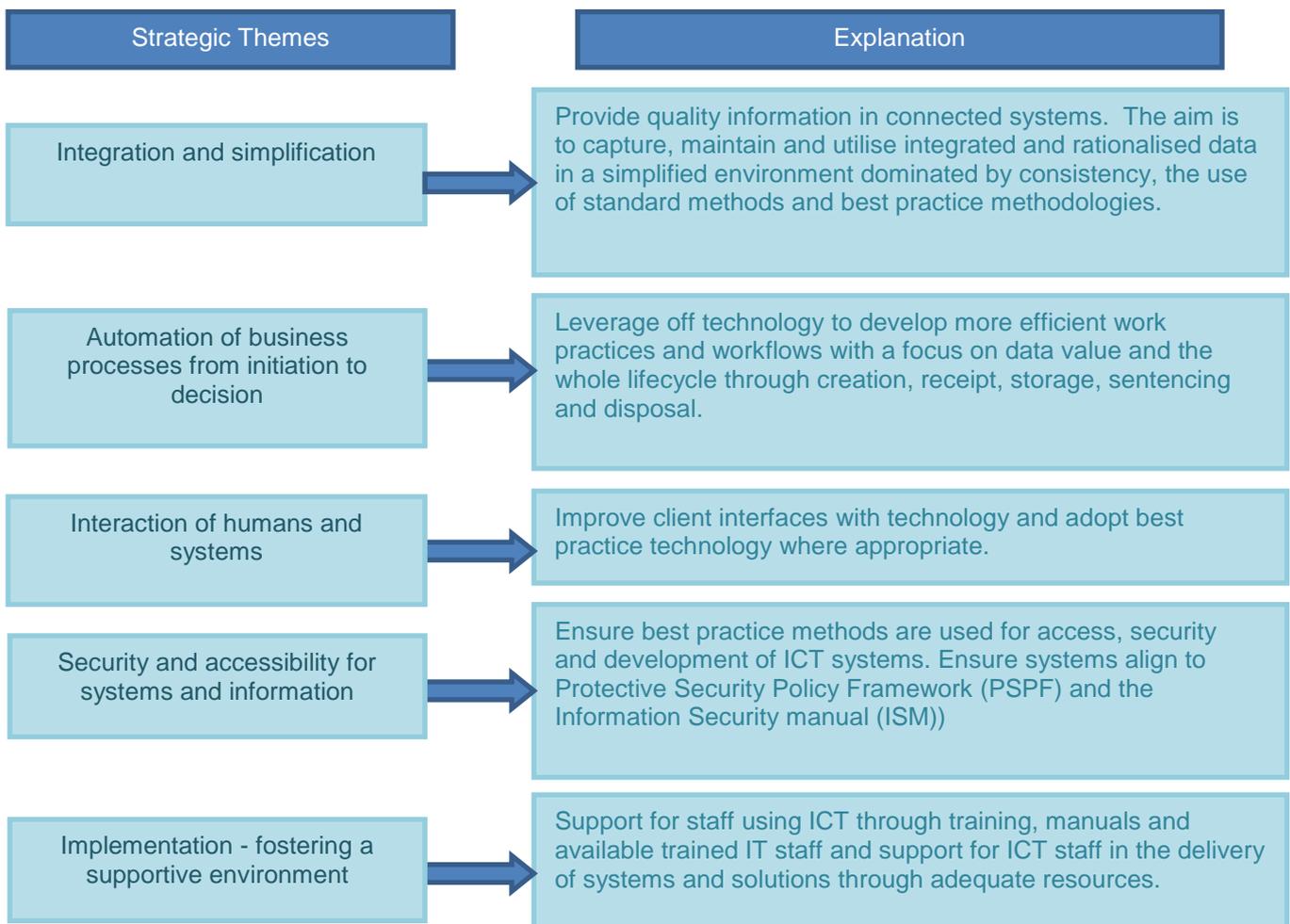
This plan seeks to consolidate the benefits from the previous strategy, using them as a platform to enhance and deliver sophisticated business support to the agency. With the systems now in place or in proposed development the APVMA is well positioned to focus on the enhancement and improvement of business processes and engagement with stakeholders to ensure all users are serviced more effectively and efficiently. One of the major outstanding facilities required to meet the business needs of the agency is the Electronic Document and Records Management System (EDRMS) which was identified in the previous plan and is in the procurement stages.

The projects that make up this plan have been organised around five strategic themes that address the priorities of the Government and the APVMA. They are:

1. Integration and simplification.
2. Automation of business processes from initiation to decision.
3. Interaction of humans and systems.
4. Security and accessibility for systems and information.
5. Implementation—fostering a supportive environment.

These project themes encompass and expand existing projects and initiatives, and ensure that each project can be placed within a context which shows its contribution to the APVMA’s strategic business goals.

Diagram 2: strategic themes



## 2 INTRODUCTION

### 2.1 Background

The purpose of an ICT/IM strategic plan is to ensure that agency ICT and IM initiatives are aligned with higher level strategic and corporate objectives, and to define the ICT standards and policies that an agency has in place. These plans are used as the basis for decision making about future acquisitions and also serve as a foundation document for ICT workforce planning. Any proposals to change or enhance business processes should be tested against the strategic plan to ensure conformance to IMICT strategic objectives.

The ICT strategic planning process involves detailed planning for business systems, information and asset management, and information and communications technology that supports the strategic and corporate objectives of the APVMA. The operational plan, business cases, reform agenda and the wider policies of the federal government and AGIMO are all input to the process to ensure the needs of all stakeholders are addressed in the plan. The relationship between the IMICT strategic plan and these inputs is shown in Figure

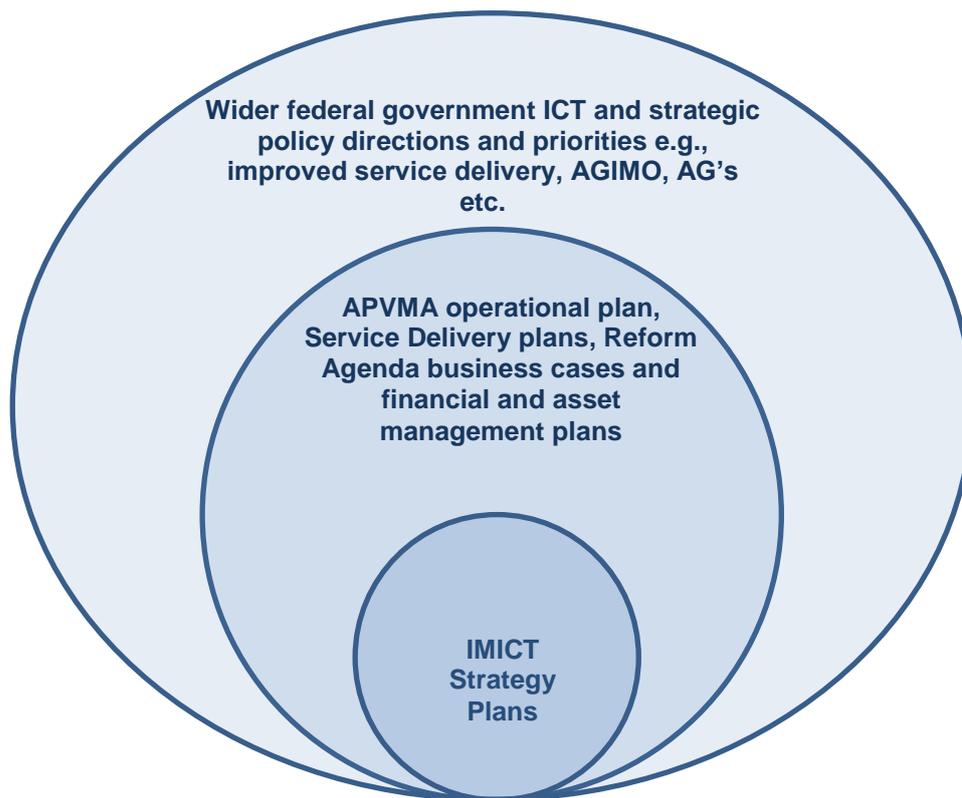


Figure 1: Relationship of ICT Strategic Planning to the Strategic Management Framework.

IMICT strategic planning also requires the establishments of governance and accountability structures to ensure the drivers for the strategy are relevant to Government, corporate and strategic objectives.

## 2.2 Goals

The goal of the IMICT strategic plan is to define the way APVMA proposes to manage and enhance its information assets to support current and future business needs. The plan will consolidate initiatives from the previous plan and build upon them to meet the agencies core responsibilities to stakeholders, and in doing so, ensure compliance to overarching government strategies and directions, and wider policy priorities.

This plan builds upon the achievements of earlier plans to position the agency to provide more efficient and effective services and greater access to its information and resources.

## 2.3 APVMA Agency Objectives

The APVMA's objectives as defined in the 2012–15 APVMA Corporate Plan is:

*Deliver the benefits of more efficient regulation to business and the community*

*Be transparent, consistent and predictable in delivering our regulatory services and decisions*

*Focus efficiency and effectiveness measures on the protection of human, animal and plant health, the environment and trade*

*Be respected and trusted for the regulatory decisions we take.*

## 2.4 APVMA Agency Strategies

The APVMA's strategies as defined in the APVMA Corporate Plan 2012–2015 is:

*Integrate government reforms into core business*

*Conduct robust, risk-based, scientific evaluations to support sound regulatory decisions*

*Identify and reconsider existing chemicals of regulatory concern*

*Identify and resolve non-compliance*

*Identify and manage emerging regulatory issues.*

## 2.5 APVMA Agency Enabling Strategies

The APVMA's enabling strategies as defined in the APVMA Corporate Plan 2012–2015 is:

*Engage stakeholders and regulatory partners to add value to our work*

*Conduct our business efficiently and effectively*

*Enhance performance through our people.*

---

## 3 OUTLINE OF CURRENT POSITION

### 3.1 Agency snap-shot and current business environment

The APVMA is the Australian Government statutory authority responsible for the assessment and registration of pesticides and veterinary medicines, and their regulation up to and including the point of retail sale. It is an FMA Act agency and sits within the portfolio of the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry.

### 3.2 Mission

The mission of the APVMA is to regulate agricultural and veterinary chemicals to protect the health and safety of people, animals and crops, the environment and trade, and support Australian primary industries.

### 3.3 Role and Functions

The APVMA is responsible for administering and managing the National Registration Scheme (The Scheme) for agricultural and veterinary chemicals. The APVMA administers the scheme's legislation in partnership with state and territory governments and with the active involvement of other Commonwealth agencies.

APVMA's principal responsibilities are prescribed in the:

- *Agricultural and Veterinary Chemicals (Administration) Act 1992*, and
- *Agricultural and Veterinary Chemicals Code Act 1994*.

The Administration Act establishes the APVMA and confers powers to administer the National Registration Scheme. The Agricultural and Veterinary Chemicals Code Act makes provision for the APVMA to evaluate, approve, register and control the manufacture and supply of agricultural or veterinary chemical products.

The APVMA's role within the Scheme is to evaluate the safety and performance of products, determine whether their use is likely to jeopardise trade, and to monitor the market for compliance. The states and territories are responsible for regulating and managing the use of pesticides and veterinary medicines once they are sold.

### 3.4 The Environment

The regulation of pesticides and veterinary medicines is dynamic and complex with changing community expectations, increasing scientific understandings and evolving risk management strategies across both national and international dimensions.

The APVMA staff rely on access to accurate and up-to-date information to make sound regulatory decisions. The challenge now and into the future is the ongoing management of the information in the most effective and efficient manner.

There are a number of pressures facing the management of APVMA information including:

- ensuring the security of the highly valuable confidential commercial information submitted to the APVMA in data and applications
- international agricultural regulatory agency pressures for shared electronic data assessments
- pressure to be more efficient and effective including reducing the ever increasing cost and space needed for physical file storage
- risks associated with not having relevant and up to date information available to decision makers and the ever increasing substrate of decisions that can be challenged and need defending
- the implementation of the Better Regulation of Agricultural and Veterinary Chemicals reforms.

In the next five years Gartner<sup>1</sup> predicts the amount of enterprise data will grow by 650% (CIO, March/April 2010). This is reflected in the tier one ICT companies e.g. SAP, Oracle, IBM, and HP investing heavily in developing systems to make this more manageable.

There are a number of enabling technologies that will better position the APVMA now and into the future to handle the increasing amount and complexity of digital information.

Access to this technology needs to be carefully controlled and assessed for risks and vulnerabilities to ensure the APVMA maintains the security and integrity of the in-confidence information it handles.

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<sup>1</sup> Gartner is internationally recognised experts in analysis of information and communications technology. Findings are generally published in whitepapers and peer reviewed journals.

Tier one ICT companies are multi nationals with significant market share

## 4 APVMA ICT AND IM ENVIRONMENT

### 4.1 Human Resources

The APVMA is the Australian regulator for pesticides and veterinary medicines. It is a small Commonwealth Government agency with approximately 170 full time equivalent (FTE) staff. The APVMA has an internal ICT (Information and Communication Technology) and IS (Information Services) team supporting the IT and information management needs of the regulator.

The Information Services section has four ongoing staff. This section manages the APVMA's information management needs. It ensures the APVMA is compliant with National Archives records management legislation, the Commonwealth Government Protective Security Policy Framework and provides library support services to staff.

The ICT team is divided into two streams, IT Operations and Security and Application Development. There are nine ongoing ICT positions and 5.8 non-ongoing positions. The non-ongoing positions are working on the implementation of a range of IT initiatives to improve the APVMA's efficiency and information management.

The ICT team manages the APVMA's ICT needs. It ensures the APVMA ICT systems are secure, robust and compliant with APVMA legislation and national and international IT standards.

The initiatives include implementation of an EDRMS (Electronic Document and Records Management System) and development of a portal for easy and secure submission of information to the APVMA.

The positions of the APVMA ICT and IS staff are shown in Figure 2:

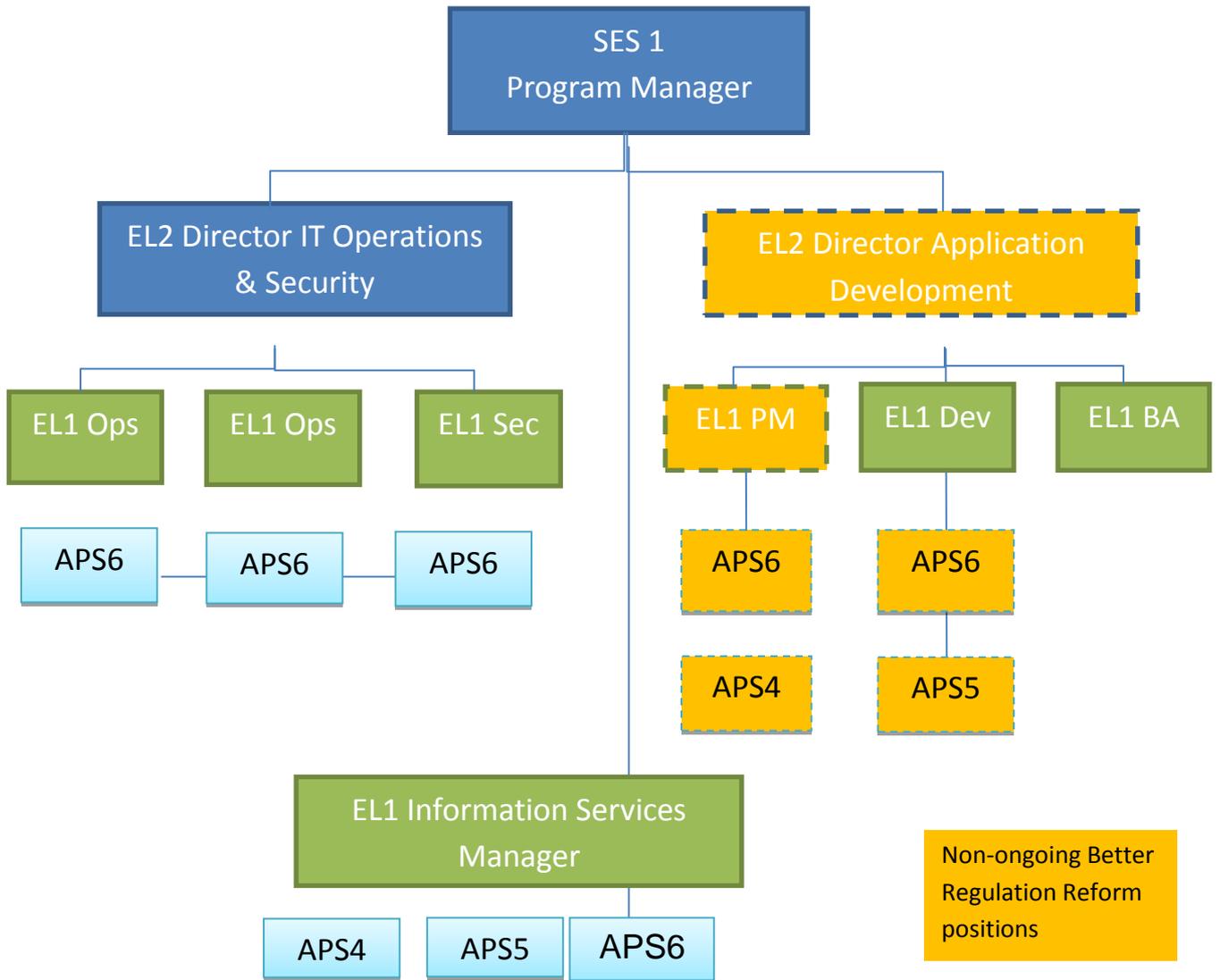


Figure 2: Current ICT and IM structure and position levels

## 4.2 Hardware and Software Resources—Network Infrastructure

### Desktops

The APVMA desktop fleet consists of 200 Acer PCs running Windows 7, 64 bit and Microsoft Office 2010. Each desktop includes dual 21 inch monitors. Desktops have NVIDIA cards and digital splitters to provide dual individual monitor capabilities. The fleet has an expected refresh cycle of 4–5 years.

## **Printers**

The APVMA's printer fleet consists of seven multi-function device (MFD) printers and 18 black and white printers. The APVMA is looking to reduce and consolidate the printer fleet to nine efficient MFDs.

## **Servers**

The APVMA server environment comprises a virtualised infrastructure of Intel and UNIX servers. Production servers include mail, mail archiving, database, database management, file storage, print servers, web servers and authentication servers.

## 5 BUSINESS APPLICATIONS AND OFFICE PRODUCTIVITY

The internal computer network, physical files, corporate relational database and data warehousing forms the backbone of the APVMA's information management environment. The desktops utilise an enterprise office productivity suite and the business applications comprise a range of bespoke and COTS (Commercial of the Shelf) third party business applications. The storage and disaster recovery environment includes SAN storage and off site backups.

### 5.1 Commercial Off the Shelf 3rd Party Business Applications—COTS

The APVMA has nine COTS third Party Business Applications servicing the following areas; HR, Finance, Records Management, Case Management, Email archive, Patch Management, Business Intelligence, Library Management System, Security System and an online e-Recruitment System.

### 5.2 Bespoke Applications

The APVMA develops and manages 16 bespoke applications. These applications utilise the corporate RDBMS infrastructure. Older applications required local installation; newer applications are developed as browser based applications.

The APVMA has 11 legacy flat database applications and a number of spread sheets holding important corporate information and overtime these will be incorporated into the corporate database infrastructure.

### 5.3 Web Applications

The APVMA maintains a web presence through the APVMA website and a number of specialised online applications for electronic payments, application submission and dynamic database searches.

The current architecture is database centric, through a single tier via stored procedures and connectivity interfaces. This represents risks to the APVMA through high overhead in knowledge to maintain and support the complex structure of application access. The figure below is a simplified representation of the current application architecture.

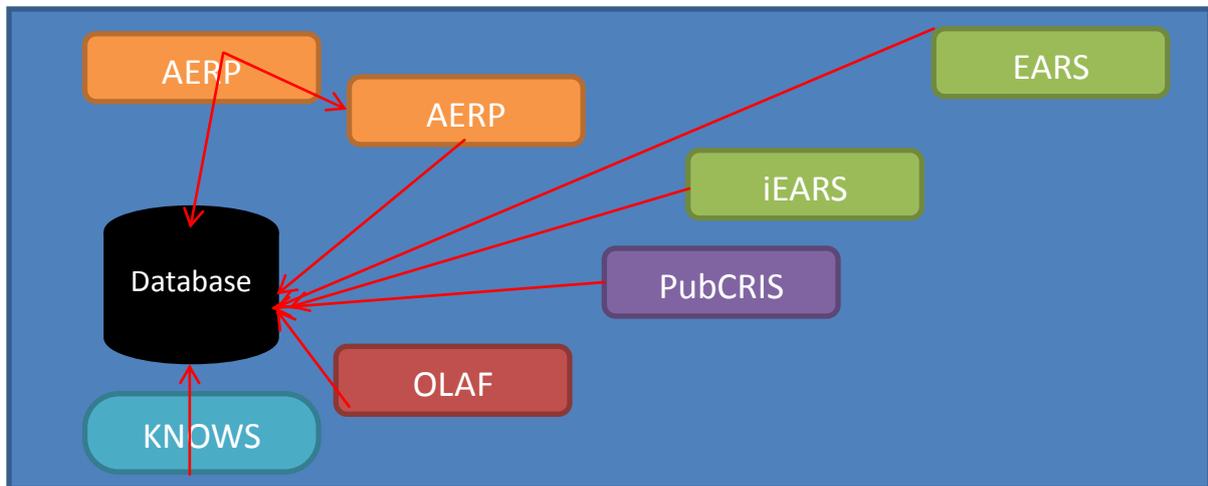


Figure 3: Diagrammatic representation of current Application Development architecture.

## 5.4 Information Management Storage Repositories and Resources

The APVMA has a large number of information storage repositories. The AgVet Code identifies specific information the APVMA must retain in records and registers. This information is maintained in the corporate relational database infrastructure. In this environment the information is stored once and captured once. The database structure ensures data normalisation and integrity. The APVMA's Quality Management system includes processes to achieve data accuracy.

In the diagram below the corporate relational database information is in green. Other information storage systems are not integrated with the corporate relational database and have been identified as being potentially inefficient and/or a risk. The inefficiencies and risks associated with multiple unlinked information storage systems is duplicate record storage, out of date information, making decisions without all the information available etc. The risk factors were assessed and categorised to assist prioritisation.

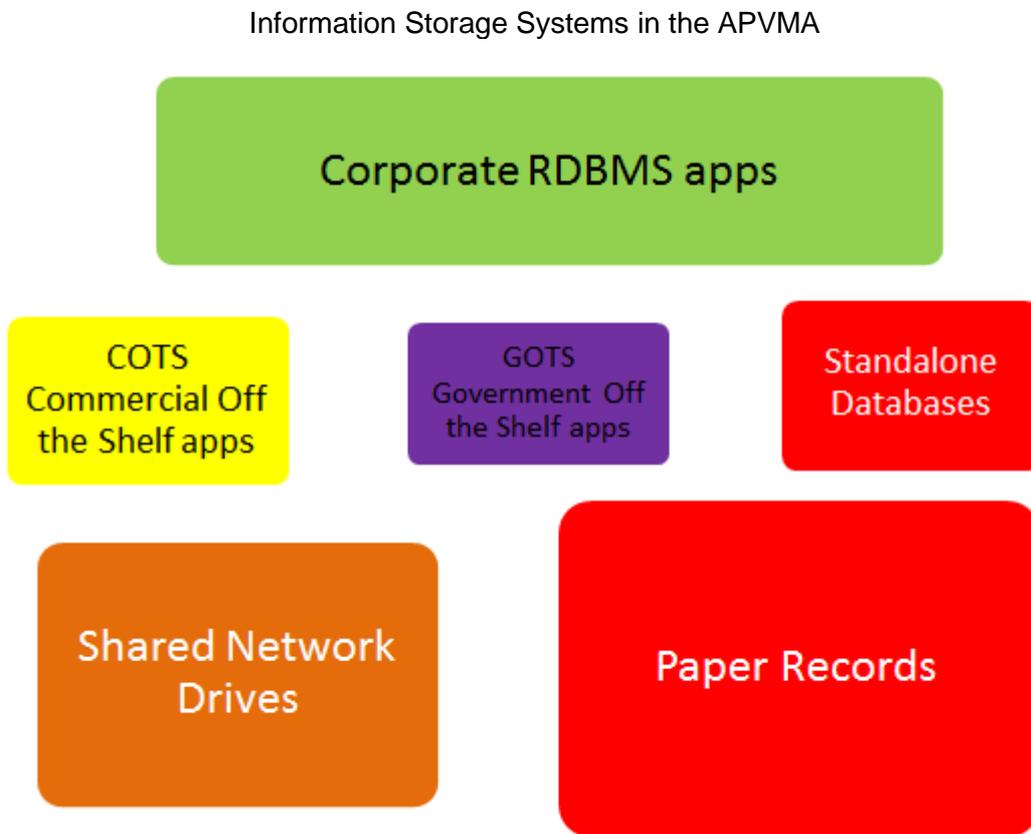


Figure 4: Diagrammatic representation of the APVMA’s information storage systems

Standalone databases and paper records are the highest risk, shared drives are the second highest risk, bespoke systems, COTS and GOTS are low risk.

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## 6 REVIEW OF THE PREVIOUS ICT STRATEGIC PLAN

### 6.1 Overview

The last IT & IM strategic plan published by the APVMA was the IT and IM strategic plan 2005–07. The primary focus of the plan was IT security and online services. The security of the APVMA systems remains at a high level. Despite continued security threats multiplying in both number and degree of complexity, the APVMA systems have remained impervious.

Primary project objectives in the 2005–07 plan included:

- EARS internal
- E-submission of data

Expansion of online services including:

- Develop AERP online reporting
- Expand the e-commerce facility to enable payment for all revenue streams
- Develop an electronic product application submission system.

### 6.2 Outcomes

The outcomes of projects identified in the last strategic plan are discussed below. In addition to the projects from the last plan this chapter also discusses some of the APVMA's significant IM and ICT achievements since the last plan.

A major relocation of the APVMA to new purpose built accommodation in Symonston, occurred in October 2006. The new building is connected to a dedicated government fibre network. Gigabit switches were purchased for the new server room to facilitate provision of a gigabit Ethernet.

The ICT move to the new building was accomplished over a weekend with ICT systems available to staff and ready to use Monday morning.

Trial voice over IP telephony was trialled, the phone system installed in the new building is a hybrid of VOIP and traditional telephony. This solution provides the flexibility of VOIP in the building without quality of service risks outside the building. The decision to implement the hybrid design was based on the trial outcomes and research project identified in the previous plan. To enhance QoS, reduce network interference and reduce security risks IP telephony was delivered over dedicated infrastructure. This has also provided the APVMA with a strong bargaining position when discussing phone service issues with the provider.

The transition of APVMA from CAC agency to FMA in 2007 brought with it the need for the APVMA to comply with mandatory Commonwealth Government requirements for ICT, Information Management, HR and Finance etc.

The APVMA connected to Fedlink in 2006. Access to Fedlink enables the APVMA to send secure emails to other Commonwealth Government Agencies who are also on Fedlink. The gateway service provider also

hosts a secure email delivery solution to allow the transmission of CCI material to recipients on public networks.

A mobile data platform accredited by DSD was installed and a small fleet of mobile devices were distributed to Executive and some other staff on a needs basis. This enables those staff to send and receive email securely via the mobile devices.

Significant Application Development over the previous plan cycle included the release of EARS Online v2.2, which contributed to the APVMA receiving an e Government excellence award for the EARS Online system.

The previous plan identified the need to recruit a dedicated business analyst to work on the EARS project. In 2010 the business analyst position within the IT team was recognised as an ongoing requirement. The position was established and successfully filled.

IT helpdesk problem logging software was researched and an inexpensive, web based solution was found. This initiative, from the previous plan, was implemented in 2007.

In 2008 a study was undertaken by APVMA IT staff of the costs and benefits of utilising virtual technology to meet the current and future challenges faced by the APVMA in maintaining a secure and robust ICT network. It was clear that Virtualisation was a proven software technology transforming the IT landscape and fundamentally changing the way people compute. Accordingly, in mid-2008, the APVMA introduced virtualisation core server systems and transitioned to general purpose, shared hardware infrastructure that offers full isolation and mobility whilst enhancing business continuity and disaster recovery. By the end of August 2008 most of the APVMA's core servers were virtualised.

The APVMA web site was redesigned and launched in 2009. This provided web site users with an easier way to access APVMA information.

A Records Management system evaluation and upgrade was recommended in the previous plan. An early version of a product was evaluated but not implemented due to identified problems. The APVMA has since evaluated a later version of the same product and found it to be a useful upgrade. This upgrade project was cancelled due to the APVMA receiving approval for funding for an EDRMS.

The strategies and projects defined in the previous plan were discussed as part of the 2011 strategic planning exercise. This was done in the form of focus groups, workshops and interviews with key staff. The outcome of these groups included identification of common failures and shortfalls in the ICT project management and information storage and accessibility. The key improvement areas were defined as follows.

### 6.3 Project Reporting

There was a perceived lack of visibility into ICT based business projects and a general lack of formal reporting both during and at completion of projects.

## 6.4 End of Project Analysis

A review of the finalisation of the ICT based business projects showed a lack of time for end of project analysis. The organisational pressures and perceived need to move on with the next project have resulted in a loss of analysis of lessons learned during the project. Without this project phase it becomes difficult to promote or enable continuous improvement.

## 6.5 Project Viability

ICT is a dynamic and rapidly changing environment. The technological infrastructure to support a project when defined may be out dated or deprecated by project initiation. This represents a risk to the organisation through use of superseded technology or may lead to project failure.

## 6.6 Information Repositories

As part of the review an analysis of the APVMA's information management environment was performed. As a result a high number of stores of corporate information were identified (in excess of 94 separate repositories of information). This discovery represents an unacceptable level of risk for the agency and a formidable overhead for information maintenance. The problems of this disparate framework of repositories include:

- inefficiency caused by data redundancy due to duplication
- resource impact from duplication of effort
- potential for providing different/conflicting advice as data may differ across different systems
- inability to identify if all available information is being used to make an informed decision
- risk of sending out CCI information to incorrect addresses because of disparate records in different sections
- reputational risk when companies advise the APVMA of a change and all systems are not updated.

Figure 5 below is a representation of the ideal Information storage architecture. To summarise the significant benefits of the proposed development the red and orange risk areas identified in Figure 4 have been removed from the organisation.

### Planned Information Storage Environment

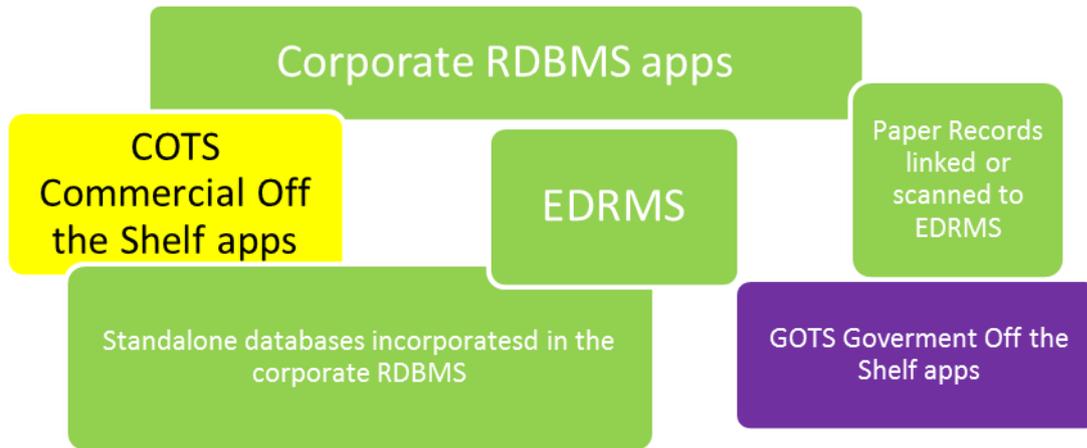


Figure 5: Diagrammatic representation of the APVMA's preferred information storage structure

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## 7 ISSUES DRIVING CHANGE IN THE CURRENT ENVIRONMENT

### 7.1 Internal Business drivers

The APVMA staff rely on access to accurate and up-to-date information to make sound regulatory decisions. The challenge now and into the future is the ongoing management of the information in the most effective and efficient manner. As identified in the 'Outline of Current Position' section there are a number of pressures facing the management of information at the APVMA including:

- ensuring the security of the highly valuable confidential commercial information submitted to the APVMA in data and applications
- international agricultural regulatory agency pressures for shared electronic data assessments
- pressure to be more efficient and effective including reducing the ever increasing cost and space needed for physical file storage, and
- risks associated with not having relevant and up to date information available to decision makers and the ever increasing substrate of decisions that can be challenged and need defending.

### 7.2 Reforms and reviews

The APVMA is subject to a number of reforms and reviews. In particular there is the Better Regulation of Agricultural and Veterinary Chemicals and the COAG Reform Agenda including review of the national Agricultural and Veterinary Medicines regulatory framework.

The outcomes of these reviews will have a significant impact on operational priorities and business processes. It is likely there will be legislative changes and consequently changes to information management requirements. As yet the extent of impact is unknown and a reform taskforce has been established within the APVMA to work on implementation of the reforms.

### 7.3 Whole of Government initiatives

The APVMA as an FMA agency is expected by the Commonwealth Government to adhere to mandatory *Government policies such as the security requirements outlined in the Attorney General's Protective Security Policy Framework*. Another whole of Government framework agencies are expected to implement is the

The Commonwealth Government Blueprint which identifies 28 objectives including:

- reduce unnecessary regulatory burden, and
- small agencies to improve the efficiency of their corporate functions.

Over the last few years there have been a number of influential reports that are largely responsible for shaping the whole of Government approach to ICT and IM:

- e-Government Strategy 2006, Responsive Government

- the Gershon report based on the review into the Commonwealth Government's management of ICT
- powering Ideas: An Innovation Agenda for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century
- Australian Government Innovation Policy Agenda to 2020 (Department of Innovation, Industry, Science and Research). Born out of Dr Terry Cutlers report 'Venturous Australia—building strength in innovation'. The concept being open information promotes innovation.
- national Government Information Sharing Strategy (NGISS) Unlocking Government information assets to benefit the broader community (National Government Information Sharing Strategy: Copyright of all Australian Governments 2009).
- government response to the Report of the Government 2.0 Taskforce Engage: Getting on with Government 2.0.

The Gershon Report commissioned in 2008 produced a large number of recommendations specifically for ICT. The report called for closer scrutiny of ICT in Commonwealth Government Agencies, including the development of centralised services, centralised procurement and the setting of mandatory ICT priorities and policies for FMA agencies.

In 2007 there was one mandatory Commonwealth Government ICT policy, some basic guidelines and no surveys. Since Gershon, as of 2010 there were 10 mandatory policies for FMA agencies, 16 regular surveys and 12 guidelines. Although much of this is a positive step forward it does represent a significant burden of extra work in particular in small agencies because many of the policies and surveys are designed for large departments where they have dedicated specialised teams for each of the 19 IT job roles.

## 7.4 Agency Enabling Strategies for the Corporate Objectives

The objectives of this IM and ICT strategic plan are driven by the APVMA's 2012–15 Corporate Plan in the following ways. The Corporate Plan's key objective for the APVMA is to deliver the benefits of more efficient and effective regulation to business and the community. The APVMA Corporate Plan identifies the following enabling strategies:

### 7.5 Engage stakeholders and regulatory partners to add value to our work

Enhancement of our web presence, improving provision of web services and linking into and leveraging off other Government initiatives such as Australia.gov.au, Business.gov.au, GovDex and Gov 2.0 will help the APVMA to more readily engage with stakeholders electronically.

Implementation of online smart forms will assist stakeholders to more easily, accurately and completely fill out APVMA forms and applications thus improving the quality of the information the APVMA receives.

### 7.6 Conduct our business efficiently and effectively

The APVMA is investing in the establishment of a comprehensive Electronic Document Management and Records System for recording and searching on important information regarding all applications and regulatory decisions.

Efficiencies include improvements in information management and exchange such as electronic acceptance and sharing of data and applications. A lot of work is being done internationally in this space and the APVMA is keenly observing developments.

Integration of the government reforms into core business will require changes to internal systems and lead to greater business efficiency and effectiveness.

## 7.7 Enhance performance through our people

By updating, upgrading and developing the ICT infrastructure, the ICT systems are better able to support APVMA staff and enhance their capability to perform their roles. An improvement to APVMA web services by introducing online smart forms will make it easier to submit applications and reports to the APVMA. It will also enhance the APVMA's performance by enabling automated data entry.

## 7.8 Stakeholder needs

An integral component to ensuring the business units are fully and extensively consulted was the implementation of the IM and ICT Strategic Plan Focus Group. The focus group included representatives from each business area including:

- Pesticides
- Veterinary Medicines
- Residues and Chemistry
- FOI and Projects
- Information Services and Records Management
- Information Technology
- Public Affairs
- Chemical Review
- Compliance
- Application Management
- Adverse Experience Reporting and
- Manufacturing Quality and Licensing.

As a tool for information dissemination and collaboration a GovDex community was established, the information for the community was based on extensive focus group workshops which gathered data on information management needs in the business units. Details of current information storage systems were documented and analysed. The members of the group produced information on future needs based on information gathering sessions in their business units and programs for input to the strategy. A list was drawn up of ICT and information management improvements the group identified from their discussions within their programs. The focus group identified 5 areas they saw as critical and approximately 100 areas for improvement.

The result was a strategy underpinned by 5 strategic themes. The strategy will be achieved through five key result areas and 13 initiatives. The 13 initiatives are listed in the IT strategy section and cover approximately 68% of the 100 areas identified by the business areas for IM and ICT improvements.

In addition a workshop held in June 2011 saw participation from all programs within the APVMA and identified a shortlist of 44 projects seen to be the key areas of need from a business perspective. These projects form the key priorities for ICT development over the next three years and are detailed in the ICT Business Plan.

## 7.9 Funding or staffing imperatives

Although APVMA has previously sought to use technology to assist in meeting its responsibilities and improve services, it has struggled to meet strategic IT objectives with limited resources.

As a part of the reform agenda, several new positions were created to enable the provision of business critical IT services to enable the reforms. This has given IT the ability to more strategically assess and prioritise projects across the organisation and plan for success within the context of this plan.

There remain some disparities within ICT and some key roles are divided amongst existing staff which impairs the ability to provide full IT service to the agency. This will be addressed through ICT workforce planning.

## 7.10 Planned obsolescence and/or system failures mitigation

As part of ongoing ICT operations the following equipment will be replaced within the time frame of the strategic plan:

- IP telephony system
- internet gateway

Due to the reform project and APVMA's commitment to the objectives of the reform agenda, several key applications will be re-developed including:

- AERP online
- OLAF payment portal
- EARS online.

There will also be significant modifications and expansion of existing systems in order to implement a more robust Service Oriented Architecture (SOA) based infrastructure for development, allowing lower maintenance overheads and improved service delivery.

## 8 ICT STRATEGY

### 8.1 IM and ICT Strategy for the APVMA

The IM and ICT strategy for the APVMA is to develop ICT systems that foster the efficient and effective use of information, support operational needs and align with information management principles and practices. This strategy is in line with the strategic themes for 2012-2015, namely:

- integration and simplification—providing quality information in connected systems. The aim is to capture, maintain and utilise integrated and rationalised data in a simplified environment dominated by consistency and the use of standard methods
- automation of business processes from initiation to decision. Leverage off technology to develop more efficient work practices and workflows with a focus on data value and the whole lifecycle of data from creation, receipt, storage, sentencing and disposal
- interaction of humans and systems. Improve client interfaces with technology and adopt modern technology where appropriate
- security and accessibility for systems and information. Ensure ‘best practice’ methods are used for access, security and development of ICT systems
- implementation—fostering a supportive environment. Support for staff using ICT through training, manuals and available trained IT staff and support for ICT staff in the delivery of systems and solutions through adequate resources to support the maintenance schedule and documentation.

These strategic themes drive the direction of the IT and IM business support over the next 3 years in the context of:

- requirement for a secure environment i.e. a proportion of data held by the APVMA is of commercial value and its disclosure is prohibited under the AgVet code legislation. This information is protected by implementing extra security protocols in the information management, physical and ICT environments
- FMA agency requirement to comply with Whole of Government and in particular PSPF policies. ICT policies relate to ICT governance, management, procurement and security other policies flow from the Commonwealth Government’s Blueprint for SES
- flow on effects and changes to core business processes from reforms and reviews such as the Better Regulation Ministerial of Agricultural and Veterinary Chemicals and the COAG reform agenda
- other requirements come from external influences such as the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers’ (ICANN) worldwide IPv6 implementation and the World Wide Web Consortium’s (W3C) Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0 (WCAG 2.0) recommendations.

### 8.2 Key areas of strategic improvement

The top five material areas where the APVMA could achieve significant improvements to information management capabilities are:

1. Implementing an ICT governance framework through establishment of an Executive ICT Governance Committee.

2. Moving the organisation from paper based to an electronic environment by the use of smart forms and an EDRMS implementation.
3. Aligning APVMA ICT security with the new Commonwealth Governments ICT security requirements published in the Defence Signals Directorate Information Security Manual (ISM) and PSPF.
4. Improving knowledge management by implementing an EDRMS and consolidating and rationalising databases.
5. Investigating new technologies such as mobile and web 2.0 technologies.

The following table lists the 13 initiatives from 100 areas the business identified to improve information management and ICT systems. The 13 initiatives cover 68% of the 100 suggestions.

**Table 1: initiatives/projects of significance and priority**

	INITIATIVE/PROJECT	RISK AND NEED	STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT
1	Electronic Document Records Management System (EDRMS)	Medium High	2,3
2	Redevelop Open Road applications in a new development environment	Low Medium	1,3
3	EARS Internal	Medium High	1,2,3
4	Integration of Access database applications into the APVMA's corporate database environment	Medium Medium	1
5	Access to mobile computing such as wireless notebooks	Low Medium	4
6	Investigation of WEB 2.0	Low Medium	4
7	MQL application enhancements	Low Low	1
8	Incorporation of large word/xls files into a relational database environment.	High High	1
9	Implementation of a Content Management System (CMS)	Low Low	3
10	Alignment of APVMA ICT security with the ISM	High High	4

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	<b>INITIATIVE/PROJECT</b>	<b>RISK AND NEED</b>	<b>STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT</b>
11	Establish new ICT Governance arrangements	Medium High	4,5
12	Implement a smart forms solution	Low High	2
13	Assess and develop information management capabilities & skills	Medium Medium	5

## 9 Projected outcomes and deliverables

This IMICT strategic plan is founded on APVMA corporate objectives. It is expected that the implementation of this plan will contribute to the delivery of the business outcomes below.

### 9.1 Improved Customer Service

Through changes to the website, the proposed projects will enhance the user experience. Payment functionality will be improved to enable more efficient online business dealings with the APVMA. A one stop shop style portal for customer access will give a feeling of customer centric purpose to our interactions. Upgrade of the systems to reflect changes in business process, along with increased ability to use electronic submission of applications will streamline and expedite the customer engagement process.

Enhanced search facilities on top of customised, service oriented architecture will address increasing demand for better access to APVMA information and bring our business to the users.

### 9.2 Organisational Effectiveness

At a minimum the APVMA's effectiveness is measured in the ability to meet regulatory obligations. Without improved technical support of the business it is not practical for APVMA to manage the applications, reviews, permits, registrations, renewals and enquiries that form the basis of the business. In addition a move to more electronic based systems will assist in the management of archived records and physical storage requirements of the agency.

### 9.3 Business Opportunities

The planned projects provide the APVMA with a number of opportunities to increase the revenue base of the agency.

The introduction of eSubmission of data, and the time savings associated with this mean the need for storage and management of large paper based files is reduced. Online delivery of real time information to the client also saves costs in administration and delivery. The increased demands on the agency for Freedom of information (FOI) requests will also be assisted by the implementation of the EDRMS and a Searchable archive capability.

### 9.4 Technology Outcomes

APVMA is working towards implementation of a dedicated Service Oriented Architecture (SOA) based infrastructure for bespoke applications. This will allow the development of pure component based applications, streamlining the development process and decoupling the database through data access layers and web services. The application delivery section will be directly responsible for the building and maintaining of the architecture and the transition of core business functionality to the new architecture. All future development within APVMA will focus on a write once use many paradigm, promoting effective use of available resources and minimal code redundancy.

Figure 6 is a representational diagram of the proposed development architecture.

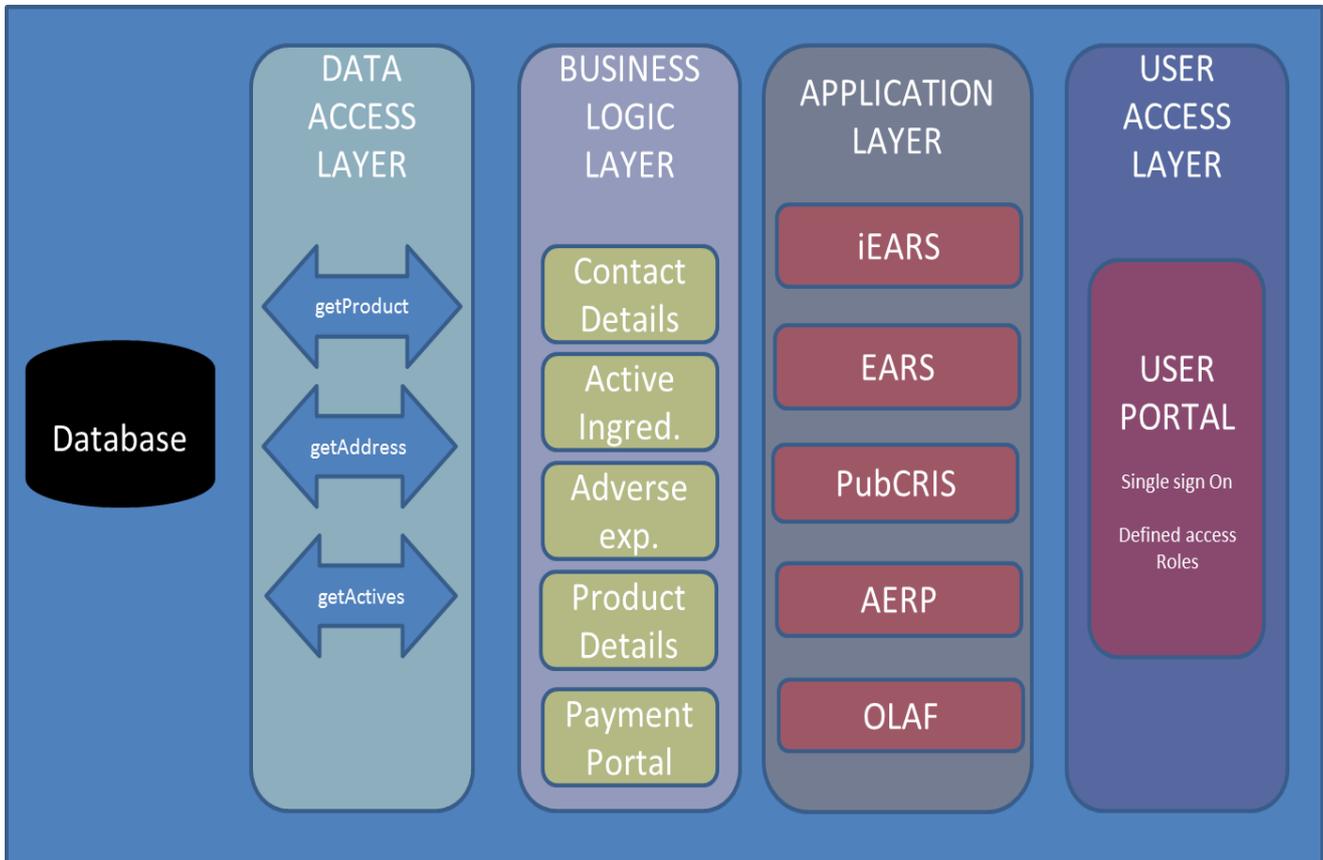


Figure 6: Proposed SOA architecture for APVMA

In addition, through the planned database redevelopment project, focus will be kept on consolidation and redundancy checking of existing data, along with redesign and development of new storage to enable faster and more accurate retrieval of information for the customer. The move to a data warehousing type solution will enable transactional only database work with all queries through a dedicated data access layer, centralising requests and basing queries on core business function rather than ad-hoc application calls to stored procedures. Moving the infrastructure to a Microsoft SQL server platform will also represent a saving in Ingres licencing.

Priority outcomes of the redevelopment projects both at application and database level will be integration of existing core applications, centralisation of business data and secure provision of APVMA held information to appropriate users, both internal and external.

## 10 GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

There is a large body of evidence across Government and the private sector that a key element in successful ICT program implementation is a large degree of personal endorsement, commitment and ongoing support from the Chief Executive Officer. This buy in ensures alignment of the ICT strategies with the Agency and Government priorities and policies and agency objectives. The APVMA has an actively participative CEO which ensures these objectives are included in the strategic management process.

As a part of the strategic planning of ICT the CEO and Executive Management Team are asked to review all governance and accountability systems across the agency. As a result of the review it is necessary to ensure progression of strategic initiatives across the ICT section. Facilitating this through the establishment of an ICT Governance Committee is essential.

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## 11 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### 11.1 ICT Governance Committee

The ICT Governance Committee is the primary body responsible to ensure that the ICT strategies being pursued by the agency are aligned to the strategic and corporate objectives and within budgets. The committee must also be responsible for the oversight of ICT to ensure effective use and management of ICT resources within the agency, and that all ICT projects are approved, planned, budgeted, prioritised and fall within the directions of the strategic plan and forecast budgets.

The APVMA has recognised the importance IT Governance and made it the direct responsibility of the Senior Executive Management team. This was formalised through an addition to the regular Executive Management meeting agenda of an IT Governance Section. The Executive team now ensure there are appropriate ICT authorities, accountability, leadership, direction and control exercised within the organisation. Other aspects encompassed include transparency of operations, effective risk management, continuity and internal control systems and accountability of ICT management through clear and timely disclosure.

### 11.2 Chief Information Officer

The role of the Chief Information Officer (CIO) in the context of the IT strategy is to ensure that agency information management resources support the business needs of the agency and reflect the government's ICT strategic priorities. CIO responsibilities include, but are not limited to, all agency information and information-related activities including network and telecommunications services, data administration, and libraries, archives and records management. In addition the CIO portfolio covers all information-related procurement services and project and contract management.

The role of the CIO is to be accountable for planning and managing all information management resources, to set corporate infrastructure standards and support the responsibilities of business managers in the agency. In short, the role of the CIO is to provide executive-level support for the strategic business planning, financial planning and business process reform of the agency through targeted IT projects and initiatives.

### 11.3 Business Unit Managers

The role of Business Unit Managers is to ensure that the business needs of their area are effectively represented in any ICT planning activity, and to take responsibility for the business process reform and relevant implementation activities of any ICT initiative that supports their business.

Business Unit Managers are responsible for:

- confirming ICT enabled solutions for their business area align to government and agency strategic and corporate objectives
- identifying their ICT system requirements as a core initiative of their business planning process, including work flow definitions

- participating in strategic planning and project definition with ICT, to ensure that business needs are fully supported by any new or enhanced ICT initiative
- undertaking and delivering the business process reform activities necessary to support the approved ICT projects as detailed within the projects relevant implementation plan
- realising the benefits of approved ICT projects where identified responsibilities have been assigned to them in project Benefits Management Plans or the Benefits Management Plan for the ICT strategic Plan
- ensuring business solutions support agreed government and agency business objectives.

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## 12 GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORKS

The APVMA has begun a process to ensure adequate governance and best practice methodologies are followed in IT projects. This will be ensured using the following targeted initiatives:

### 12.1 Project management methodology

In October of 2011, IT application development began a process to implement Prince2 as the preferred Project Management methodology for IT projects. This was started as a means of addressing the perceived shortfalls in previous IT project management. It was also decided that the Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK) would be adopted as best practice methodology for IT. Using these guidelines and the templates created for customized use by the APVMA IT section, future projects can be better managed and controlled.

### 12.2 Risk management framework

The Risk Management Plan 2011–12 describes the risk assessment project and its outcomes, including the definition of risk, organisational risk appetite and unacceptable strategic and program risks. The Policy also analyses the systemic issues identified throughout the process and the action, monitoring and review proposed to mitigate these issues. All ICT projects should take into perspective the organisational risk management plan when considering risk appetite and allowable risk.

### 12.3 Change management framework

ICT has implemented the ISO based change management best practice using support protocols such as change requests and procedure amendment requests. ICT are currently investigating implementation of Kaseya Help Desk software to allow complete change tracking through a consolidated ICT workflow process from request to implementation.

### 12.4 Information Security program

The APVMA's Information Security program is detailed in the Information Security Policy (July 2011). This policy outlines the position of the APVMA across all key ICT security areas including:

- Information Security Governance
- Risk Management
- Information Classification
- System Security Documentation
- Information Security Statements of Control.

## 13 CONCLUSION

This IMICT strategic plan and the governance framework the APVMA is implementing will stand the agency in a strong position to efficiently and effectively implement the progressive changes required by the reform agenda.

## ABBREVIATIONS

AERP	Adverse Experience Reporting Program
AGs	Attorney Generals
AGIMO	Australian Government Information Management Office
AgQA	Agricultural Quality Assurance System
APS	Australian Public Service
APVMA	Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority
BA	Business Analyst
CAC	Commonwealth Authority and Companies Act
CCI	Confidential Commercial Information
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CIO	Chief Information Officer
CMS	Content Management System
COAG	The Council of Australian Governments
COTS	Commercial Off The Shelf
DB	Database
DSD	Defence Signals Directorate
EARS Online	Electronic Application Registration System Online
EDRMS	Electronic Document Records Management System
EL	Executive Level employee
E-commerce	Electronic commerce
E-submission	Electronic submission
Fedlink	Enables secure communications between Australian Government agencies
FTE	Full Time Equivalent
FMA Act	Financial Management and Accountability Act 1997
FOI	Freedom Of Information
GOTS	Government Off The Shelf
Gov 2.0	Interactive and collaborative government

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GovDex	Secure online communications and collaboration platform
HR	Human Resources
KNOWS	Knowledge management system
ICANN	Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IM	Information Management
IP	Internet Protocol
IPv6	Internet Protocol version 6
ISM	DSD's Information Security Manual
ISO	International Standards Organisation
MFD	Multi-Function Device
MQL	Manufacturing Quality and Licensing
NGISS	National Government Information Sharing Strategy
OLAF	Online Levies and Fee Payment System
OS	Operating System
PM	Project Manager
PMBOK	Project Management Body of Knowledge
PSPF	Protective Security Policy Framework
PubCRIS	Public Chemicals Registration Information System
QoS	Quality of Service
RDBMS	Relational Data Base Management System
SES	Senior Executive Service
SLA	Service Level Agreement
SOA	Service Oriented Architecture
VOIP	Voice Over Internet Protocol
W3C	World Wide Web Consortium
WCAG 2.0	Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0
Web 2.0	Websites that enable users to interact and collaborate with each other

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