

Tasmanian Government Website Standards

Web Publishing Strategy, Principles and Minimum Requirements

Version 1.6, July 2010

Acknowledgements

The amendments in this release were developed by Tasmanian Government Agency representatives on the Web Publishing Standards Working Group and the Tasmanian Government Web Publishing Framework Reference Group.

Contents

Amendments in this release	4
1 INTRODUCTION	5
1.1 Status	5
1.2 Purpose	5
2 STRATEGY STATEMENT	6
3 PUBLISHING PRINCIPLES.....	7
3.1 Principle One – Delivery of web content.....	7
3.2 Principle Two – Discovery of non-web content.....	7
3.3 Principle Three – Legal requirements.....	7
3.4 Principle Four – Equity of access and maximum usability.....	7
3.5 Principle Five – Quality and functionality.....	7
4 MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS	8
4.1 Accessibility (Principles 3 and 4)	8
4.2 Discoverability (Principles 1, 2, 3 and 4)	10
4.3 Information Management (Principles 3 and 5).....	12
4.4 Consistent User Experience (Principles 4 and 5)	16

Amendments in this release

Amendments in creating Version 1.6, July 2010, include:

Section	Amendment Summary
All sections	Updated references to the Office of eGovernment and contact details.
2 The Strategy Statement	Amended to ensure web content is presented in an objective and apolitical manner.
3 Principles	Principle 5 - Amended to ensure web content is presented in an objective and apolitical manner.
4.3 Information Management	Amended to ensure web content is presented in an objective and apolitical manner. Reference to Tasmanian Government Communications Policy added.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Status

The Tasmanian Government Website Standards are the latest iteration of standards agreed by the Heads of Agency in February 2000. Previously known as the Tasmanian Government Web Publishing Standards (TGWPS), these standards were first endorsed by the Inter-Agency Steering Committee in 2002 and approved by the Heads of Agency in 2003.

These standards are regularly reviewed by a standing Web Publishing Reference Group that includes representatives from all Agencies. Revisions for currency and relevance are made when required.

1.2 Purpose

The Tasmanian Government Website Standards

- Outline the minimum requirements for Tasmanian Government Agencies in the design, development and maintenance of Agency websites for the delivery of information and services to the Tasmanian community;
- Are intended to promote consistent application of website standards across Agencies; and
- Reference the existing legislation, legal precedent and Government policies that are considered most relevant or significant and could therefore impact on the design, development and maintenance of Agency websites. It should be noted that the referenced legislation commenced on various prior dates and therefore may already apply, as may much of the referenced Government policy.

While compliance with the Minimum Requirements for all website content across Government is the ultimate aim, it is recognised that implementation timelines and pathways will be decided by individual Agencies.

The Website Standards are relevant to Agency executives, senior managers, communications and marketing managers, content producers and web publishing practitioners. It is acknowledged that Agencies may have internal guidelines or policies that contain additional or more stringent requirements and design frameworks.

'Agencies' means Tasmanian Government inner-budget Agencies, namely the Departments of: Economic Development, Tourism and the Arts; Education; Health and Human Services; Infrastructure, Energy and Resources; Justice; Police and Emergency Management; Premier and Cabinet; Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment; and Treasury and Finance. Many of the legal and policy requirements also apply to groups such as Statutory Authorities, Government Business Enterprises and State Owned Companies, and local government.

2 STRATEGY STATEMENT

2.1 Websites are an important, effective and established channel for communicating with, and delivering services to the Tasmanian community.

2.2 Taking into account the needs and capacities of the intended users, Agencies should ensure:

- web content is objective, apolitical, complete, current, accurate, and clear
- web services are easy to find and use
- the design, structure and content of each website is based on user research,
- web content is aligned with overall Agency communications strategies, ensuring consistent, interactive communications across all channels, with all customers, and
- consistent design principles are applied across Government.

2.3 Agencies work together to support better practices by taking opportunities to:

- share knowledge and tools,
- collaborate on systems or processes, and
- lever off individual Agency activity to provide benefits across Government.

2.4 Ongoing maintenance of websites requires commitment of resources, including financial, infrastructure, human and training resources. This means that:

- each website should serve a business need and have defined business outcomes, and
- each website should be evaluated regularly to determine if it is achieving the planned business outcomes.

3 PUBLISHING PRINCIPLES

3.1 Principle One – Delivery of web content

Public information is to be made available online except where the Head of Agency determines not to publish on the Web for reasons of:

- high cost relative to the benefit of electronic accessibility;
- low usage;
- high publication complexity; or
- low suitability for web delivery.

3.2 Principle Two – Discovery of non-web content

Details of public information not made available on the Web must be able to be discovered on the Web. A brief summary must be provided together with details on how to access a copy via email, telephone or mail.

3.3 Principle Three – Legal requirements

Agencies must ensure that all web content complies with all laws of the Commonwealth and State and the common law.

3.4 Principle Four – Equity of access and maximum usability

Agencies must ensure access to, and usability by, the widest possible target community appropriate to the service or resource.

3.5 Principle Five – Quality and functionality

Agencies are responsible for their website content and must ensure that content is objective and apolitical. Agencies must ensure the services and resources provided are comparable in quality and functionality to those delivered by other means.

4 MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

4.1 Accessibility (Principles 3 and 4)

4.1.1 Community Expectation

Web content provides a service to users and should be available to the widest possible audience.

4.1.2 Regulation and Policy

Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cwth)

Prohibits discrimination against persons on the grounds of disability, requires that persons with disabilities have equality of access, and establishes the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, which has endorsed the W3C Web Content Accessibility Guidelines.

Available at: http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/cth/consol_act/dda1992264/

Human Rights and Equal Opportunities Commission Advisory Notes:
http://www.hreoc.gov.au/disability_rights/standards/www_3/www_3.html

Anti Discrimination Act 1998

Prohibits direct and indirect discrimination including in the provision of facilities, services and goods.

Available at: <http://www.thelaw.tas.gov.au/index.w3p>

Anti-discrimination Commission: <http://www.antidiscrimination.tas.gov.au/>

Tasmanian Government Disability Framework for Action 2005 – 2010

Seeks to remove barriers, and enable people with disabilities to enjoy the same rights and opportunities as other Tasmanians.

Available at: <http://www.dpac.tas.gov.au>

Element	Minimum Requirement
W3C	Websites must : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet full compliance with all W3C Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0 Priority 1/Level A checkpoints; • Aim for Priority 2/Level AA compliance • Try to implement as many Priority 3/Level AAA checkpoints as possible Where audience needs are specific, websites should become Level AA or AAA as appropriate. W3C Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0 are available at: http://www.w3.org/WAI
Publishing Formats	Formats which are not native to web browsers and require additional software such as plug-ins may only be used: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • when targeting specific audiences with an installed software base and realistic technical capability to use it and • when accompanied by a summary and details on how to obtain a copy by other means, or • when accompanied by a version in a format native to web browsers (eg HTML).
End User Browser Capability	Websites must be functional on as many browsers as possible without being technology or platform dependent.
Screen Resolution	Websites must be scalable for use by different screen sizes and resolutions.
Bandwidth usage	Websites should be designed with Tasmania's topography and dispersed population in mind, and file sizes kept to a minimum. Where particular audiences are being targeted, specific bandwidth requirements may need to be identified.

For more information: refer to the Tasmanian Government Web Publishing Usability Guidelines (includes accessibility issues) available at www.egovernment.tas.gov.au

4.2 Discoverability (Principles 1, 2, 3 and 4)

4.2.1 Community Expectation

The community expects to be able to discover web content easily. Agencies should configure websites so content can be located quickly and maintained efficiently for currency.

4.2.2 Regulation and Policy

Australian Government Locator Services (AGLS) metadata standards

A set of 19 descriptive elements endorsed by all Australian Government jurisdictions through the Online Council which can be used to improve the visibility and accessibility of services and information over the Web.

Agencies wishing to deploy AGLS metadata are invited to contact the State Library for advice.

Available at: <http://www.naa.gov.au/records-management/publications/AGLS-Element.aspx>

Tasmanian Government Web Publishing: Web Discovery Guidelines

These Guidelines represent the State Library of Tasmania's expert advice on the best practice methodology to facilitate access to Government web resources. The Guidelines also enable Agencies to easily identify the key issues involved in establishing a discovery metadata process.

Available at: <http://www.egovernment.tas.gov.au>

Tasmania Online

Provides a central portal for the public to locate material on a range of State Government websites. For the central portal to work, Tasmania Online needs to add new material when it becomes available, or modify references to material that changes over time. Because of high community use of the site, it is important that agencies alert Tasmania Online to additions or major changes to the subject matter of their websites.

Details and form available at: <http://www.service.tas.gov.au/notification.asp>

Element	Minimum Requirement
Publishing	<p>Except where this is impractical because of high cost, low usage, high publication complexity or low suitability for web delivery, Agencies must publish on the Web all the information they make public. This includes but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • directory information covering contact details and services; • annual reports, agency strategic plans and other public accountability publications; • reports submitted to Parliament; • media releases; • official speeches and other public information released by Ministers, holders of statutory offices or senior agency officers; • information that will enable the public and organisations to understand the services delivered by the agency; • information that will enable the public and organisations to understand their own obligations and responsibilities; • information about agency powers affecting the public; • forms for public use; • all publications released in printed or other formats; and • information on how to access via email, telephone, facsimile or mail, public information that is not published on the Web for the reasons listed above. <p>Consideration should be given to whether the published content requires an International Standard Book Number (ISBN) or International Standard Serial Number (ISSN).</p> <p>To determine publication status consult the Tasmanian Government Communications Policy (available at www.communications.tas.gov.au), your Agency communications manager or library.</p>
Tasmania Online	<p>Agencies are required to notify Tasmania Online when additions or major changes to their websites occur. A form is available at: http://www.service.tas.gov.au/notification.asp. Agencies that utilise a 'What's new' page need only notify Tasmania Online of the URL for this page and Tasmania Online will monitor it for additions. If in doubt as to the extent of changes that require notification, contact Tasmania Online.</p>
Metadata	<p>Any metadata made available outside of Government (such as to portal sites) must comply with the applicable metadata standards, including the AGLS metadata standards and must be created following the current Tasmanian Government Web Discoverability Guidelines.</p>

For more information: refer to the Tasmanian Government Web Discovery Guidelines available at www.egovernment.tas.gov.au

4.3 Information Management (Principles 3 and 5)

4.3.1 Community Expectation

Processes need to ensure that content placed on websites is objective, apolitical, accurate, current, auditable, authorised and secure, with proper records kept of what content was provided at what time and in what format.

4.3.2 Regulation and Policy

Archives Act 1983

Requires Agencies to preserve all records made or kept, electronic or otherwise, until disposed of in accordance with the Act.

Defamation Act 1957

The law of defamation applies to material published on the Web. The word 'published' simply means made known to the public.

Evidence Act 2001, Electronic Transactions Act 2000

Documents, representations and records made, held or communicated electronically may be retrieved (compulsorily or voluntarily) and used as evidence in a court of law. In other words, everything on the Web is discoverable in any court action (even after it has been taken down).

Libraries Act 1984

Requires that copies of all material published in Tasmania, including electronic publishing, be lodged with the State Library. Refer to the Policy information for details on how this legislation should be interpreted and applied.

Tasmanian legislation available at: <http://www.thelaw.tas.gov.au> (Tasmanian State Government legislation database).

Copyright Act 1968 (Cwth)

This Act was amended effective 2001 to extend copyright ownership to digital and other electronic machine-readable material. In particular, it was confirmed that a digitised version of non-digitised material is a reproduction, and vice versa. The provisions of the Act apply to all materials appearing on the web, including graphics, music, photographs, artwork and written text.

Available at: <http://www.scaleplus.law.gov.au/> <http://www.comlaw.gov.au/> (Commonwealth of Australia Law database maintained by the Attorney-General Department) or at <http://www.austlii.edu.au/databases.html>

Crown Copyright

The copyright in materials created by State employees in the course of their employment and by any other person under the direction or control of the Crown is owned by the Crown, except where there has been prior agreement to the contrary. Note that copyright ownership pertains to the Crown, not to Agencies.

Archives Office of Tasmania State Records

Guideline 15: Recordkeeping Strategies for Websites and Web Pages

Confirms that websites and web pages are State records and therefore must be managed in accordance with the *Archives Act 1983* and sets out a range of strategies from which agencies should choose depending on the nature of their website, the complexity of the business transacted through it, and the way it relates to their business systems.

Available at: http://www.archives.tas.gov.au/legislative/staterecords/guidelines_list

Enquiries to: AOT.Berriedale@education.tas.gov.au

State Library Digital Preservation Services

As part of the Library's statutory duty to ensure that material published electronically in Tasmania is preserved, the State Library provides two services – the STORS electronic publication repository and the Our Digital Island website preservation facility, which archives copies of government web pages both regularly, and when notified of significant changes. Agencies should note that this activity only meets the requirements regarding published material described in the *Libraries Act 1984*. Agencies still need to maintain their own records in a way that complies with the *Archives Act 1983*.

STORS: <http://www.stors.tas.gov.au>

Our Digital Island: <http://odi.statelibrary.tas.gov.au/>

Enquiries to: metadata@education.tas.gov.au

Tasmanian Government Information Security Framework

The Tasmanian Government Information Security Framework is formed from the Tasmanian Government Information Security Charter that outlines the endorsed information security principles and policies to be applied by agencies.

A range of guidelines, policies and information are available to support better practice in information management across government, including information security.

Available at: <http://www.egovernment.tas.gov.au>

Enquiries to: egovernment@dpac.tas.gov.au

Whole of Government Communications Policy

The *Whole of Government Communications Policy* aims to ensure effective communications between the Tasmanian public and the Government for the benefit of all. It is implemented across Government and supported by the Tasmanian Government Communications Website.

Available at: <http://www.communications.tas.gov.au>

Enquiries to: info@communications.tas.gov.au

Personal Information Protection Act 2004

The *Personal Information Protection Act 2004* (the Act) applies personal information protection principles to the activities of the Tasmanian public sector, including all State Service Agencies, statutory authorities and Government Business Enterprises, the Tasmanian Local Government sector and the University of Tasmania. The Act came into effect on 5 September 2005 and regulates the collection, maintenance, use and disclosure of personal information by personal information custodians.

A range of materials are available to help public sector bodies implement the legislation.

Available at: <http://www.thelaw.tas.gov.au> (Tasmanian State Government legislation database)

Enquiries to: legislation.development@justice.tas.gov.au

Element	Minimum Requirement
Recordkeeping and disposal	Agencies must create and maintain sufficient records to meet accountability and evidence obligations. In particular they must be able to verify what content or transactional services were accessible from their websites at any particular time and document any business transactions that occurred. (See State Records Guideline No. 15 – Recordkeeping Strategies for Websites and Web pages: http://www.archives.tas.gov.au/legislative/staterecords/guidelines_list) The disposal of supporting records is authorised in the Disposal Schedule for Records of Common Administrative Functions, DA No. 2157 (See http://www.archives.tas.gov.au/legislative/disposal/list_of_schedules). The disposal of web content must be authorised in a specific Agency Disposal Schedule (See State records Guideline No. 6 – Developing a Functional Records Disposal Schedule, http://www.archives.tas.gov.au/legislative/staterecords/guidelines_list)
Notification of State Library	Agencies should lodge copies of stand-alone electronic publications in STORS. For more information email stors@education.tas.gov.au Agencies must notify the State Library of major changes to the presentation or content of their websites, eg a website re-development, so that the website can be preserved in Our Digital Island. If agencies have already notified STO about these changes then that meets this requirement as well. Email notifications to: metadata@education.tas.gov.au
Protection from unauthorised change	Web publishing and the processes that support it must comply with the Whole of Government Information Security Framework Policy and Guidelines, available at www.egovernment.tas.gov.au

Publication status	<p>Under the Tasmanian Government Communications Policy (available at www.communications.tas.gov.au), a work is deemed to have been published if reproductions of the work or edition have been supplied (whether by sale or otherwise) to the public.</p> <p>This includes books, newsletters, brochures, pamphlets, booklets, reports (including annual reports), research papers, conference papers, articles for popular magazines and scientific or professional journals, protocols and policies, manuals, guidelines, videotapes, audiotapes, posters, fliers, photographic material, and electronic formats eg websites, disks and CD-ROMs.</p> <p>All publications must include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • title of publication • author (the name of the Department, NOT the name/s of individual employee/s) • source (the Unit/Branch/Division producing the publication + contact details such as postal address, phone, email and website address) • date of publication (month and year) and version if applicable • corporate identity (Tasmanian Government logo) • volume / issue number if the publication is part of a series • International Standard Book Number (ISBN) or International Standard Serial Number (ISSN) where applicable. Under the Policy, an ISBN should be allocated to online publications. In general, a publication must be 'book-like' to receive an ISBN. Websites do not qualify. Your departmental communications/marketing unit and/or library can provide advice and guidance about ISBNs.
Use of copyright information	Agencies must obtain permission from the relevant copyright owner before reproducing or communicating on a website any material which has not been created by the State Crown.
Personal Information Protection	Web based services and the agency processes that support them must comply with the Personal Information Protection Act 2004.

For more information: refer to the Tasmanian Government Web Content Management Guidelines available at www.egovernment.tas.gov.au

4.4 Consistent User Experience (Principles 4 and 5)

4.4.1 Community Expectation

Users should be able to identify when content is provided by the Tasmanian Government, easily contact the agency responsible and navigate to other key whole-of-government content.

4.4.2 Regulation and Policy

Tasmanian Government Style Guide and Logo Policy

Guidelines for use of the Tasmanian Government logo and details of the mandatory and flexible elements of the Government's design framework.

Available at: <http://www.communications.tas.gov.au>

For further information, contact your Agency Communications Manager.

Copyright and Disclaimer Notices

The official web versions of the whole-of-government copyright and disclaimer notices are maintained at: <http://www.tas.gov.au/stds/codi.htm>. These copyright and disclaimer notices were prepared by the Office of the Solicitor-General for application to all web publishing by the Crown.

The Copyright notice gives visitors to Government websites a limited licence to use the material published. If Agencies web publish any material that the Crown does not own the copyright to, then they must include an additional notice on their website revoking this limited licence. Alternatively Agencies may renegotiate their Copyright in the material to allow the material to be published under the whole-of-Government Copyright notice. Similarly, if Agencies publish material with the intention that it be available for commercial purposes, that extended licence should be indicated on the individual website, page or individual document. Any specific conditions of use must also be stated. In either case, a draft of any additional copyright statements should be checked with the Office of the Solicitor-General.

Enquiries to: Solicitor.General@justice.tas.gov.au

Tasmanian Government Web Domain Naming Guidelines

Guidelines for naming Tasmanian Government websites and the process for seeking approval to register or remove a website address. Provided as part of the Whole of Government Communications Toolkit (see Publishing – print, multimedia and web).

Available at: <http://www.communications.tas.gov.au>

Element	Minimum Requirement
Link to tas.gov.au	<p>Those agencies that are required to use the Tasmanian Government authorised logo must include that logo on all web pages as a clearly identifiable link back to tas.gov.au</p> <p>Those agencies that are not required to use the Tasmanian Government authorised logo must include on all web pages a clearly identifiable link back to tas.gov.au</p>
<i>Service Tasmania Online Link</i>	All agency and business unit homepages must include a clearly identifiable link to <i>Service Tasmania Online</i> .
Header, Footer and Page Layout	All main pages must conform to the Tasmanian Government Web Publishing Design and Navigation Guidelines.
Domain Names	Agencies must observe current Tasmanian Government policy and processes when requesting Domain Name Services or decommissioning a website.
External Links	<p>Clear indication should be provided when linking to external sites that the information provided is the responsibility of that external source and not the referring Tasmanian Government website, and that no endorsement, sponsorship or commercial advantage by the Government is implied. The implications of linking to external sites should be thoroughly assessed to minimise legal liability (eg. for infringement of copyright).</p> <p>So that users recognise when they are about to leave a Tasmanian Government website, Agencies must adopt one or more of the following strategies when external links (that is to websites outside the Tasmanian Government) are provided on their websites.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mechanisms for indicating links that are external to Tasmanian government: • Site presentation and design that indicate a proportion of listed links is external • Contextual references or phrasing that indicate one or more links are external • Including clear links to the standard disclaimer notice to avoid or disclaim liability • Displaying a visual cue such as a graphic or text to identify external links • Opening external content within a new window.



Tasmania
Explore the possibilities

OFFICE OF eGOVERNMENT
Department of Premier and Cabinet

Post: GPO Box 123
Hobart TAS 7001
Ph: 6232 7722
Email: egovernment@dpac.tas.gov.au
Visit: www.egovernment.tas.gov.au

Published July 2010
ISBN 978 0 7246 5579 4
© State of Tasmania - Department of Premier and
Cabinet, 2010