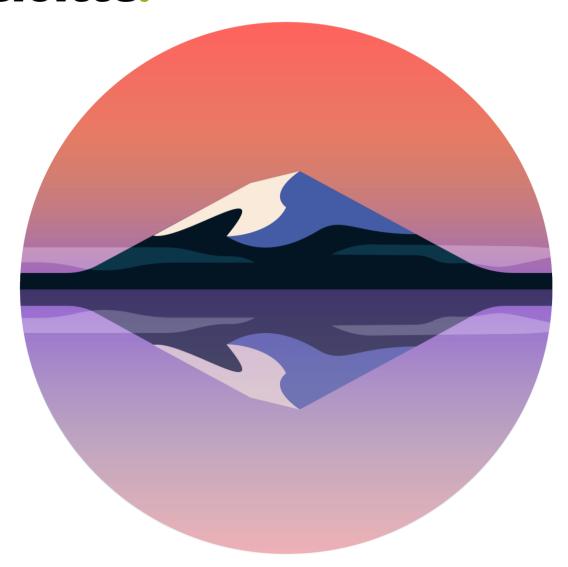**Deloitte.**

Rangahau Ahumāra Kai

The New Zealand Institute for Plant and Food Research Limited

Public Records Act 2005 Audit Report

Prepared for Te Rua Mahara o te Kāwanatanga | Archives New Zealand

Final Report

January 2024

MAKING AN
IMPACT THAT
MATTERS
since 1845

Table of Contents

1. Disclaimers

USE OF REPORT

This report has been prepared in accordance with the Consultancy Order Services dated 1 December 2020 and variation dated 23 September 2021. We have prepared this report solely for Te Rua Mahara o te Kāwanatanga Archives New Zealand (Te Rua Mahara) and The New Zealand Institute for Plant and Food Research Limited (Plant and Food). It was prepared at the direction of Te Rua Mahara and may not include all procedures deemed necessary for the purposes of the reader. The report should be read in conjunction with the disclaimers as set out in the Statement of Responsibility section. We accept or assume no duty, responsibility, or liability to any other party in connection with the report or this engagement, including, without limitation, liability for negligence in relation to the factual findings expressed or implied in this report.

INDEPENDENCE

Deloitte is independent of Te Rua Mahara in accordance with the independence requirements of the Public Records Act 2005. We also adhere to the independence requirements of the New Zealand Auditing and Assurance Standards Board's Professional and Ethical Standard 1 (Revised): Code of Ethics for Assurance Practitioners. Other than this audit programme, we have no relationship with or interests in Te Rua Mahara.

STATEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITY

The procedures that we performed did not constitute an assurance engagement in accordance with New Zealand Standards for Assurance engagements, nor did it represent any form of audit under New Zealand Standards on Auditing, and consequently, no assurance conclusion or audit opinion is provided. The work was performed subject to the following limitations:

This assessment is based on observations and supporting evidence obtained during the review. This report has taken into account the views of Plant and Food and Te Rua Mahara, and both have reviewed this report.

Because of the inherent limitations of any internal control structure, it is possible that errors or irregularities may occur and not be detected. The procedures were not designed to detect all weaknesses in control procedures as the assessment was performed by interviewing relevant officials and obtaining supporting evidence in Information Management (IM) Maturity Assessment of Te Rua Mahara.

The matters raised in this report are only those which came to our attention during the course of performing our procedures and are not necessarily a comprehensive statement of all the weaknesses that exist or improvements that might be made. We cannot, in practice, examine every activity and procedure, nor can we be a substitute for management's responsibility to maintain adequate controls over all levels of operations and their responsibility to prevent and detect irregularities, including fraud. Accordingly, management should not rely on our deliverable to identify all weaknesses that may exist in the systems and procedures under examination, or potential instances of non-compliance that may exist.

We have prepared this report solely for the use of Te Rua Mahara and Plant and Food. The report contains constructive suggestions to improve some practices which we identified in the course of the review using the instructions and procedures defined by Te Rua Mahara. These procedures are designed to identify control weaknesses but cannot be relied upon to identify all weaknesses.

2. Executive Summary

RANGAHAU AHUMĀRA KAI | THE NEW ZEALAND INSTITUTE FOR PLANT AND FOOD RESEARCH LIMITED

Rangahau Ahumāra Kai | The New Zealand Institute for Plant and Food Research Limited (Plant and Food) is a Crown Research Institute governed by the Crown Research Institute Act 1992. It was established in 2008 following the merger of HortResearch and Crop and Food Research. The overall purpose of Plant and Food is to provide research to help enhance production systems and reduce inputs, so that New Zealand can produce safer and better food to feed tomorrow's population.

The core functions of Plant and Food include:

- Providing research and developing services that adds value to fruit, vegetables, crop and food products including from marine sources.
- Creating sustainable food systems and pipelines of new technologies for commercialisation either directly or in partnership with others.

Plant and Food employ approximately 1200 employees and has its head office in Auckland with 13 additional sites in New Zealand and three in Australia.

The following four subsidiaries of Plant and Food use its Information Management (IM) systems to manage their information: CropSeed Ltd, Berryfruit Holdings Ltd, Plant and Food Research (USA) Corporation and Plant and Food Research Australia Pty Ltd. The Kiwifruit Breeding Centre is also a Plant and Food subsidiary but does not use Plant and Food's IM systems to manage their information.

Plant and Food holds high-risk/high-value records including research and development data, financial information, and information used to support the development of strategy, policies and intellectual property.

The Chief Information and Security Officer (CISO) is the Executive Sponsor (ES) responsible for overseeing IM. IM staff are part of the wider Digital Workplace and Knowledge Services (DWKS) team and are split into three specialised teams with nearly eight full time employees (FTEs). In addition, a data steward is placed in each science team to ensure research data is managed correctly. There are approximately 80 data stewards who have IM responsibilities.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

We assessed Plant and Food's IM maturity against the five maturity levels of the IM Maturity Assessment issued by Te Rua Mahara and the results are summarised below:

Maturity Level and Number of Findings

Beginning	3
Progressing	14
Managing	3
Maturing	-
Optimising	-

3. Introduction

BACKGROUND

Te Rua Mahara provides IM leadership across the public sector. This is achieved through monitoring public offices' IM practices to assure the New Zealand public that:

- Full and accurate records are created and maintained, improving business efficiency, accountability, and government decision-making, and in turn, enhancing public trust and confidence in government.
- Government is open, transparent, and accountable by making public sector IM practices known to the public.

Section 33 of the Public Records Act 2005 (PRA) requires that every public office has an independent audit of its record keeping practices every 5-10 years. The audit programme is part of Te Rua Mahara monitoring and reporting on the state of public sector IM. It is one of the key components of their Monitoring Framework, which also includes a biennial survey of public sector IM and the IM Maturity Assessment.

The Chief Archivist has commissioned Deloitte to undertake these audits of certain public offices and this audit of Plant and Food was completed in November 2023.

OBJECTIVE

The objective of the audit is to identify IM strengths and weaknesses within the public office, prioritising areas that need attention and recommending improvements. These audits assist organisations to improve their IM maturity and to work more efficiently and effectively.

SCOPE

Deloitte has undertaken an independent point-in-time assessment of the IM practices at Plant and Food against the IM Maturity Assessment. The IM Maturity Assessment aligns with the PRA and the mandatory Information and records management standard (the Standard) issued by Te Rua Mahara. Topics 17 and 19 of the IM Maturity Assessment are only applicable to local authorities and have therefore been excluded for the purposes of this audit.

The IM Maturity Assessment classifies the maturity of IM practices from "Beginning" (least mature) to "Optimising" (highest maturity level). The maturity level of Plant and Food for each topic area is highlighted under each of the respective areas. Ratings were based on Plant and Food's staff responses to questions during in-person interviews and the supporting documents provided pre-audit.

Te Rua Mahara provided Deloitte with the framework including the specified audit plan, areas of focus for the PRA audits, and administrative support. Deloitte completed the onsite audit and audit report, which Te Rua Mahara reviewed before being released to Plant and Food. Te Rua Mahara is responsible for following up on the report's recommendations with Plant and Food.

Our audit was based on a sample of IM systems, the review of selected documentation on a sample basis, and interviews conducted with a selection of staff in focus groups. As such, this audit does not relate to an Audit as defined under professional assurance standards.

Plant and Food's feedback to this report is set out in Section 6.

4. Information Management Maturity Summary

This section lists the IM Maturity level for each of the assessed topic areas. For further context refer to the relevant topic area in Section 5.

No.	Topic	Beginning	Progressing	Managing	Maturing	Optimising
Assessed Maturity Level						
Governance						
1	IM Strategy		●			
2	IM Policy		●			
3	Governance Arrangements & Executive Sponsor			●		
4	IM Integration into Business Processes		●			
5	Outsourced Functions and Collaborative Arrangements	●				
6	Te Tiriti o Waitangi		●			
Self-monitoring						
7	Self-monitoring		●			
Capability						
8	Capacity and Capability		●			
9	IM Roles and Responsibilities		●			
Creation						
10	Creation and Capture of Information		●			
11	High Value / High Risk Information		●			
Management						
12	IM Requirements Built into Technology Systems		●			
13	Integrity of Information			●		
14	Information Maintenance and Accessibility		●			
15	Business Continuity and Recovery		●			
Storage						
16	Appropriate Storage Arrangements			●		
Access						
18	Information Access, Use and Sharing		●			
Disposal						
20	Current Organisation-specific Disposal Authorities	●				
21	Implementation of Disposal Decisions		●			
22	Transfer to Te Rua Mahara	●				

Note: Topics 17 and 19 of the IM Maturity Assessment are only applicable to local authorities and have therefore been excluded.

5. Audit Findings by Category and Topic

GOVERNANCE

> The management of information is a discipline that needs to be owned top down within a public office. The topics covered in the Governance category are those that need senior-level vision and support to ensure that government information is managed to ensure effective business outcomes for the public office, our government, and New Zealanders.

Topic 1: IM Strategy

High-level statement outlining an organisation's systematic approach to managing information across all operational environments of an organisation.	Progressing

OBSERVATIONS

The draft IM Strategy (the Strategy) is ready for the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) to review and aligns to Plant and Food's wider business and strategic direction, and internal policies. This includes the IM policy, Metadata policy, Information Disposal policy, and the Research Data Management policy. Once approved, the Strategy will inform the development and delivery of the IM work programme including initiatives and implementation activities to be undertaken.

RECOMMENDATION

Finalise and implement the Strategy and ensure it informs the IM work programme and meets business needs.

Topic 2: IM Policy and Processes

An information management policy supports the organisation's information management strategy and provides a foundation for information management processes.	Progressing

OBSERVATIONS

Plant and Food has a current IM policy (the 'Policy'), which the SLT approved in 2020. The Policy was not reviewed in 2022 as planned and has been delayed until the draft Strategy is approved. The Policy aligns with the PRA and references other relevant legislation such as, the Privacy Act, Official Information Act as well as Te Tiriti o Waitangi. It also aligns to internal policies on disposal and metadata, but the Policy does not document core IM roles and responsibilities.

Staff confirmed the Policy is included in induction training and can be found on the intranet (iPlant), which is also Plant and Food's internal name for SharePoint). Localised IM processes exist but IM staff stated these are unlikely to be documented.

Compliance with the Policy is not actively monitored. However, staff stated that when a breach is identified this is raised with their immediate manager and dealt with on a case-by-case basis, the ES is also informed.

Include IM roles and responsibilities in the Policy.

Topic 3: Governance Arrangements and Executive Sponsor

The Executive Sponsor has strategic and executive responsibility for overseeing the management of information in a public sector organisation.	Managing

OBSERVATIONS

The IM governance group, the Information Management and Security Governance Group (IMSGG) was established in April 2023 and meets monthly to discuss IM matters. A draft Terms of Reference (ToR) outlines the core responsibilities of the governance group and there is a section on IM responsibilities that aligns to the IM Maturity Assessment issued by Te Rua Mahara. The draft ToR has a section titled 'standing agenda' for IMSGG meetings but was incomplete.

The IMSGG is comprised of six members, which includes the CISO, the ES at Plant and Food. The ES acts as a sponsor for IM projects and reports IM matters at the SLT meetings. The other members of IMSGG are the IT Security Manager, Privacy Officer, Head of Information Management, Head of Science Data Management and the Information and Records Manager.

IM staff provide monthly reports to the ES that detail SharePoint activities. These reports include basic statistics around requests, and sites created as well as different aspects of work the team have completed.

RECOMMENDATION

Finalise the IMSGG ToR and create a formalised standing agenda for IMSGG meetings.

Topic 4: IM Integration into Business Processes

All staff should be responsible for the information they create, use, and maintain. Business owners should be responsible for ensuring that the information created by their teams is integrated into business processes and activities. The IM team support business owners and staff.	Progressing

OBSERVATIONS

Business owners are assigned responsibility for IM and have some understanding of their individual and team's responsibilities. However, IM responsibilities are not documented in policies or procedures. Despite this, IM is a key component to their role and is at the core of Plant and Food's objectives as a research institute.

Business units have different IM processes and practices despite using the same systems and as a result staff have varying experiences with IM guidance from their managers. Staff stated IM was not considered when business processes were changed or updated unless it directly related to records management. Staff have received some training on how to store records in SharePoint, though this is largely left up to individual teams to determine.

IM services are split into three specialised teams: Digital Workplace, Information and Records and Science Data Facilitation. These teams are designed and used to support business processes and activities, and all staff interviewed noted that IM staff are approachable and helpful.

Document business owners' responsibilities for IM in policies and procedures.

Topic 5: Outsourced Functions and Collaborative Arrangements

Outsourcing a business function or activity or establishing collaborative initiatives does not lessen an organisation's responsibility to ensure that all requirements for the management of information are met.	Beginning

OBSERVATIONS

The requirements for IM are included in some contracts with outsourced functions and collaborative arrangements. This includes Plant and Food retaining intellectual property ownership of their information in all contracts reviewed.

IM staff said not all external parties are aware of the public record status of the records they hold, and contracts do not always include reference to relevant New Zealand legislation. Furthermore, contracts viewed did not specifically mention IM.

IM roles and responsibilities were not included in contracts. This was acknowledged as an area Plant and Food are looking to improve.

There is no regular monitoring over contracts in place to ensure compliance with the PRA.

RECOMMENDATION

Include IM roles and responsibilities in contracts for outsourced functions and collaborative agreements.

Topic 6: Te Tiriti o Waitangi

The Public Records Act 2005 and the information and records management standard supports the rights of Māori under Te Tiriti o Waitangi/Treaty of Waitangi to access, use and reuse information that is important to Māori.	Progressing

OBSERVATIONS

Plant and Food has started to locate and identify information of importance to Māori, and this is recorded in two registers named records of importance to Māori, and records relating to the Waitangi Tribunal. These documents are a work in progress.

IM implications within Te Tiriti o Waitangi settlement agreements and other agreements with Māori are acknowledged but not well understood. Plant and Food's Research Data Management policy mentions Te Tiriti o Waitangi obligations. This policy also aligns to other relevant legistlation including the PRA and Plant and Food's Māori strategy.

In addition, a science data facilitator is on a group reviewing Māori data sovereignty. Furthermore, Plant and Food has had discussions with other Crown Research Institutes (CRIs) on how to improve access to information of importance to Māori.

RECOMMENDATION

Ensure all information of importance to Māori has been identified and documented.

SELF-MONITORING

Public offices are responsible for measuring and monitoring their information management performance for planning and improvement purposes. This helps to ensure that IM systems and processes are working effectively and efficiently. It also ensures that public offices are meeting the mandatory information and records management standard, as well as, their internal policies and processes.

Topic 7: Self-Monitoring

Organisations should monitor all aspects of their information management.

Progressing

OBSERVATIONS

Plant and Food monitors some compliance with the PRA, standards and other relevant legislation/regulation. For example, as forementioned the IMSGG meet monthly, and the ES receives monthly reports on IM. Furthermore, IM staff plan to use an Information Security Management System (ISMS) to annually self-assess against the IM Maturity Assessment of Te Rua Mahara. This will be reported to the IMSGG and the ES.

Corrective actions to address compliance depend on the level of security breach. IM staff are informed if a breach occurs, which is addressed through Human Resources (HR) and the employee's manager.

RECOMMENDATION

Develop a process to regularly monitor IM against the PRA, standards and other relevant legislation.

CAPABILITY

Information underpins everything our public offices do and impacts all functions and all staff within the public office. Effective management of information requires a breadth of experience and expertise for IM practitioners. Information is a core asset, and all staff need to understand how managing information as an asset will make a difference to business outcomes.

Topic 8: Capacity and Capability

Organisations should have IM staff or access to appropriate expertise to support their IM programme.	Progressing

OBSERVATIONS

The team managers of Digital Workplace, Information and Records, and Science Data Facilitation report to the DWKS Manager, who oversees their work and:

- The Digital Workplace team has nearly 5 FTEs who provide data management guidance and support to most of Plant and Food. In addition, they provide professional support on SharePoint and conduct technical testing on platform changes.
- The Information and Records team has nearly 3 FTEs and provide support around record keeping and information management. This includes supporting policies and procedures as well as guiding staff on storage and transfer of records to ensure information is accessible.
- Science Data Facilitation has 1 member, who is mainly part-time. The Facilitator supports scientists in meeting Research Data Management policy requirements, which includes training and supporting Plant and Food's data stewards alongside wider IM staff.
- In addition, 80 data stewards have completed additional IM training and are placed in all science teams. Their role is to ensure research data is managed correctly. Data stewards are trained by the DWKS team and supported and monitored by the Science Data Facilitator who meet with them monthly.

Staff stated IM capability and capacity is periodically assessed by each IM team's manager to ensure there are enough staff to perform IM activities. This is not a formal group review but rather based on the individual teams when they identify gaps that need to be filled.

Internal IM staff are encouraged to request IM related professional development (PD) opportunities, although there is no budget specifically set aside for this. Staff do request PD opportunities with one team member studying a postgraduate diploma in IM and others have attended IM webinars.

RECOMMENDATION

Regularly assess IM capability and capacity including resourcing business as usual and initiatives to deliver the Strategy.

Topic 9: IM Roles and Responsibilities

Staff and contractors should be aware of their responsibility to manage information.

Progressing

OBSERVATIONS

IM responsibilities are only included in IM staff job descriptions and professional development plans. Their responsibilities are communicated to staff as part of the induction process. When responsibilities change due to the introduction of new systems or updates to a system, additional training is provided. Induction training provided for all staff is not mandatory. IM training provided is ad hoc, for example, when new systems are introduced or when requested. There is a plan to develop ongoing organisation wide IM training, this is to be centred around providing SharePoint training, which was recently rolled out in October 2023.

All staff had an awareness of their IM responsibilities and feel comfortable approaching IM staff if they need assistance. However, staff had differing experiences with IM training and some reported additional IM training would be beneficial, in particular for regional staff. Furthermore, contractors do not receive formal IM training and any IM knowledge is from prior experience.

RECOMMENDATION

Assess the need for mandatory IM training and deliver a programme to meet the identified needs ensuring contractors are included.

CREATION

It is important to take a systematic approach to the management of government information, and this starts with an understanding of what information must be created and captured. It is expected that public offices create and capture complete and accurate documentation of the policies, actions, and transactions of government. Knowing what information assets are held by public offices is essential to IM practice.

Topic 10: Creation and Capture of Information

Every public office and local authority must create and maintain full and accurate information documenting its activities.	Progressing

OBSERVATIONS

Most staff are aware of their responsibility to create full and accurate records. Controlled environments like SharePoint and iPlant are the main repositories used for core work. The use of uncontrolled environments like DropBox and saving files locally is discouraged and there are no tools in place to prevent this. Appropriate metadata is created to support the usability, reliability and trustworthiness of information. With iPlant, staff are prompted to fill in this metadata, but documents can be saved without this information.

Staff know where to save information but do not always save to where they should. This is because staff consider iPlant as clunky and difficult to use. The weekend before our audit, iPlant was updated to SharePoint 2016. An aim of this update was to reduce the misuse of shadow IT and address barriers with creating and capturing information.

There is an inconsistent approach to monitoring and addressing information usability, reliability, and trust issues. Managers might monitor this in their teams, but this is at their discretion.

RECOMMENDATION

Identify usability, reliability and trust issues and address them in iPlant.

Topic 11: High-Value/High-Risk Information

Staff and contractors should be aware of their responsibility to manage information. Every public office and local authority must create and maintain full and accurate information documenting its activities.	Progressing

OBSERVATIONS

Plant and Food has an Information Asset Register (IAR) which captures some high-value/high-risk information assets. This is relatively new and is still being populated but links assets directly to relevant legislation and is designed to assess value and risk.

Although some information has been captured in the IAR, it does not provide a complete view of all high-value/high-risk information assets and is a work in progress.

RECOMMENDATION

Finalise identifying and recording all high-value/high-risk information assets in the IAR.

MANAGEMENT

Management of information should be designed into systems to ensure its ongoing management and access over time, including following a business disruption event. The information must be reliable, trustworthy, and complete and managed to ensure it is easy to find, retrieve and use, as well as protected and secure.

Topic 12: IM Requirements built into Technology Solutions

IM requirements must be identified, designed, and integrated into all of your organisation's business systems.	Progressing

OBSERVATIONS

IM expertise is involved in designing and configuring decisions for most new and upgraded business systems. For example, the Digital Workplace team were heavily involved in the recent upgrade to SharePoint. They are also involved in decommissioning of old systems such as the previous SharePoint version. When decommissioning systems, the Information and Records team are also involved to make sure actions taken are in accordance with the PRA.

System documentation is available for some systems, but details vary. This includes an application list managed by a couple of teams, a failover document between data centres and a document for licensed services. In addition, standardised IM requirements for new and upgraded business systems are not always documented.

RECOMMENDATION

Ensure that IM requirements are addressed during design and configuration decisions for all new and upgraded systems.

Topic 13: Integrity of Information

Information should be managed so that it is easy to find, retrieve and use, while also being secure and tamper-proof.	Managing

OBSERVATIONS

Practices are in place to ensure information is reliable and trustworthy, this includes version control and use of metadata in SharePoint. Plant and Food's metadata is a mix of system generated and additional metadata that staff complete when prompted by the system, although it is not a mandatory requirement.

There are no barriers for staff to access routinely accessed information, however information used infrequently is more difficult to find. As a result, staff said they sometimes need to reach out to the respective person or team for assistance. In addition, staff were confident the information they create and manage is comprehensive and complete.

RECOMMENDATION

Identify the findability issues with some information and resolve.

Topic 14: Information Maintenance and Accessibility

Information maintenance and accessibility cover strategies and processes that support the ongoing management and access to information over time.	Progressing

OBSERVATIONS

Plant and Food has strategies in place to manage and maintain physical information during business and system changes. This includes list and location registers and access controls. For example, when the Auckland office relocated, the IM staff communicated what information could be kept, disposed or stored offsite.

Preservation needs for physical records are identified and plans are in place to address these. Most physical records are digitised and/or stored offsite by a third party, those that are not, are working documents that will eventually be digitised and stored offsite. In addition, risks to ongoing accessibility of physical information are identified with plans in place to address them.

Some technology obsolescence risks are identified and are documented, although there are no plans in place to address these.

Strategies are also in place to manage and maintain digital information during business and system changes. IM is considered at a high level in business requirements for all applications. The new SharePoint included migration plans, metadata continuity and access controls. Preservation needs for digital information include audit trails, soft delete, and metadata on iPlant and other systems. This is not identified in a formalised Digital Continuity Strategy.

RECOMMENDATION

Develop plans to address identified technology obsolescence risks.

Topic 15: Business Continuity and Recovery

This covers the capability of the organisation to continue delivery of products or services, or recover the information needed to deliver products or services, at acceptable pre-defined levels following a business disruption event.	Progressing

OBSERVATIONS

The business continuity plan (BCP) was last reviewed in 2019. In addition, Plant and Food also has detailed disaster recovery (DR) plans for their data centres and SharePoint which were last reviewed in 2023. Both the BCP and DR plans include detailed actions for restoring digital business information. Physical information is included in the BCP or DR plans.

All digital systems are frequently backed up and were recently tested with the update to SharePoint. Prior to that, the BCP was last tested in May 2023.

RECOMMENDATION

Ensure the BCP is reviewed on a regular basis.

STORAGE

Good storage is a very important factor for information protection and security. Appropriate storage arrangements for both physical and digital information ensures information remains accessible and usable for as long as it is required for business and legal purposes and for accountable government.

Topic 16: Appropriate Storage Arrangements

Appropriate storage arrangements for both physical and digital information ensures information remains accessible and usable throughout its life.	Managing

OBSERVATIONS

Most physical information is kept offsite and stored with a third-party storage provider. Information retained on-site is in a room that that require swipe card access and is kept in cabinets. Most of these files have been digitised. Sensitive information is locked, and limited staff have access to the key. Files are stored in an orderly manner and tracked in a register, barcodes are often put on the physical file, but not always.

On-site information has appropriate ventilation, and the office is cleaned daily. Fire extinguishers are stationed at all entrances with smoke alarms, although there are no sprinklers.

There are appropriate storage arrangements in place for digital information against unauthorised access, loss, or deletion. This includes soft delete on iPlant, and information is locked at a container level to restrict access to required staff. Digital information is stored in Australia, the United States and in New Zealand.

Protection and security processes are tested regularly. For example, the failover processes between severs were last tested in 2019 and physical security processes are actively monitored. Furthermore, Plant and Food advised of no major physical or digital breaches.

RECOMMENDATION

Ensure all physical information kept on-site is appropriately stored.

ACCESS

Ongoing access to and use of information enables staff to do their jobs. To facilitate this, organisations will need mechanisms to support the findability and usability of information. Information and data that is shared between organisations is identified and managed.

Topic 18: Information Access, Use and Sharing

Staff and contractors are able to easily find and access the information they need to do their work. Access controls for information is documented and consistently applied and managed. Metadata facilitates discovery and use of information. Information and data received or shared under information sharing agreements is managed according to IM policies and processes.	Progressing

OBSERVATIONS

Plant and Food has a metadata schema however there is no organisation-wide taxonomy or ontology. IM staff were involved with the initial set up of iPlant sites, but each team have their own practices. Staff would like more guidance and organisation wide practices to improve this.

Staff were confident they know how to use systems and tools that contain and facilitate access to information, but not all contractors do. In addition, access controls for physical and digital information are implemented and maintained. For digital systems this includes restricting access to folders within iPlant. Furthermore, all digital systems checked comply with Te Rua Mahara minimum metadata requirements.

IM processes are not actively applied to incoming and outgoing information and data shared with external parties. However, due to the research nature of Plant and Food's work, contracts cover intellectual property and confidentiality.

RECOMMENDATION

Identify improvements for the taxonomy to ensure that staff have a consistent experience with SharePoint across the organisation.

DISPOSAL

Disposal activity must be authorised by the Chief Archivist under the PRA. Public offices should have their own specific disposal authority as well as actively use the General Disposal Authorities for disposal of general or more ephemeral information. Disposal should be carried out routinely. Information of archival value, both physical and digital, should be regularly transferred to Te Rua Mahara (or have a deferral of transfer) and be determined as either "open access" or "restricted access".

Topic 20: Current Organisation-Specific Disposal Authorities

This is about an organisation having its own specific disposal authority, not the implementation of the disposal actions authorised by the authority. It is not about the General Disposal Authorities.	Beginning

OBSERVATIONS

Plant and Food does not have a current and approved organisation-specific disposal authority (DA), however they were involved in developing a CRI sector wide DA. When Te Rua Mahara approves the CRI sector-wide DA, Plant and Food plans to use it to dispose of core business records.

RECOMMENDATION

Finalise the sector-wide CRI DA with Te Rua Mahara.

Topic 21: Implementation of Disposal Decisions

This is about the implementation of disposal decisions, whether from organisation-specific disposal authorities or the General Disposal Authorities.	Progressing

OBSERVATIONS

Plant and Food has a records disposal policy which outlines how digital and physical records should be disposed and the roles and responsibilities for disposal. The Information and Records Manager provides the internal authority, and all disposals are documented in a disposal register. However, Plant and Food does not have a current DA and have recorded limited disposals under the General Disposal Authorities (GDAs). Staff stated disposal actions will happen more routinely once the CRI DA is approved.

The destruction of physical information is secure, complete and irreversible as this service is provided by a third party who provide a certificate once the information is destroyed. The destruction of some digital information is secure, complete and irreversible.

RECOMMENDATION

Develop a plan to ensure disposal actions are routinely carried out and that include disposal against the new sector-wide CRI DA.

Topic 22: Transfer to Te Rua Mahara

Information of archival value, both physical or digital, should be regularly transferred to Te Rua Mahara or a deferral of transfer should be put in place.	Beginning

OBSERVATIONS

Plant and Food has identified physical information that is older than 25 years or of archival value. A Deferral Agreement with Te Rua Mahara expired in 2018. It has not been renewed as it needs to be aligned with the new CRI specific DA, which is still to be approved.

RECOMMENDATION

Once the sector-wide CRI specific DA is approved, discuss with Te Rua Mahara the process for transferring (digital records and, to the Auckland repository, physical records) or deferring the transfer.

6. Summary of Feedback

This Public Records Audit Report, conducted on behalf of Te Rua Mahara o Te Kāwanatanga Archives New Zealand, has been reviewed by Plant & Food staff with clarity sought regarding differences from our self-accessed scores. The subsequent response from the Audit Team has revised the draft report assessment along with useful background that shaped their scoring. This detailed information will help inform our plans to improve maturity levels across the multiple Topics.

It is noted that three Topics are pending the approval of a CRI sector-wide Disposal Authority by Te Rua Mahara.

The Public Records Audit Maturity Assessment is acknowledged by Plant & Food Research.

Deloitte.

Te Rua Mahara o te Kāwanatanga Archives New Zealand
10 Mulgrave Street
Wellington
Phone +64 499 5595
Websites www.archives.govt.nz
www.dia.govt.nz

4 March 2024

Mark Piper
Chief Executive Officer
Rangahau Ahumāra Kai the New Zealand
Institute of Plant and Food Research
mark.piper@plantandfood.co.nz

E te rangatira e Mark, tēnā koe

Public Records Act 2005 Audit Recommendations

This letter contains my recommendations related to the recent independent audit of Rangahau Ahumāra Kai the New Zealand Institute for Plant and Food Research (Plant and Food Research) completed by Deloitte under section 33 of the Public Records Act 2005 (PRA). Thank you for making your staff and resources available to support the audit process.

Introduction

Te Rua Mahara o te Kāwanatanga Archives New Zealand (Te Rua Mahara) is mandated by the PRA to regulate public sector information management (IM). The audit programme is a key regulatory tool in our Monitoring Framework.

Monitoring IM practice across the public sector gives assurance that the government is open, transparent and accountable by providing visibility of public sector IM practices. Full, accurate and accessible information improves business efficiency and government decision-making and accountability, which in turn enhances public trust and confidence. Information that is well managed unlocks the value of government information for the benefit of everyone.

We are confident that you and your organisation are committed to delivering high-quality, trusted information to decision-makers, other government organisations, customers and stakeholders. We trust that the audit process will support this commitment. The audit report and this letter recommend changes to support improvement of your organisation's IM practices.

Audit findings

In the audit report, the auditor has independently assessed your information maturity against the framework of our IM Maturity Assessment. Prior to the audit, your organisation completed the Maturity Assessment. This provided a self-assessment of IM maturity for your own use and as context for the auditor about your organisation.

Kia pono ai te rua Mahara – Enabling trusted government information

Auckland Regional Office, 95 Richard Pearse Drive, Mangere, Auckland
Christchurch Regional Office, 15 Harvard Avenue, Wigram, Christchurch
Dunedin Regional Office, 556 George Street, Dunedin

Organisations that are assessed as having a maturity level of 'Managing' across all IM topics are broadly meeting the minimum requirements expected by the PRA and the mandatory Information and records management standard. The IM maturity for Plant and Food Research is not at the 'Managing' level with most topics assessed at 'Progressing'.

As described in Topic 4: *IM Integration into Business Processes,* IM practice is largely performed by individual teams training and supporting staff. More central control of practice and processes will improve consistency across the organisation, and this starts with mandatory induction training for all staff.

As you have noted in your feedback in the audit report, the application of the joint Crown Research Institutes' disposal authority (DA) after approval, will enable all three disposal topics to be matured. The DA is currently still in development, and we are expecting it to be sent to us shortly for review. The subsequent work for Topics 21: *Implementation of Disposal Decisions* and 22: *Transfer to Te Rua Mahara* should be included in the Strategy and resources made available for this work to be started and sustained.

Prioritised recommendations

The audit report lists 20 recommendations to improve your organisation's IM maturity.

We endorse all recommendations as appropriate and relevant. To focus your IM improvement programme, we consider that your organisation should prioritise the nine recommendations as identified in the Appendix.

What will happen next

The audit report and this letter will be proactively released on our website shortly. We would be grateful if you would advise of any redactions that your organisation considers are necessary within 10 working days.

As required by the PRA, I will also provide the Minister of Internal Affairs with a report on the results of the audit programme for each financial year, which is tabled in the House of Representatives.

We will follow up this letter with a request to your Executive Sponsor that your organisation provides us with an action plan to address the prioritised recommendations. Our follow up process will track your progress against the action plan.

Thank you again for your support with the audit. We would greatly appreciate further feedback on the audit process and the value it provides to organisations. We have sent a feedback survey link for the attention of your Executive Sponsor in the accompanying email.

Nāku iti noa, nā

Anahera Morehu
Poumanaaki Chief Archivist
Te Rua Mahara o te Kāwanatanga Archives New Zealand

Cc John McMaster, Chief Information Officer (Executive Sponsor),
John.McMaster@plantandfood.co.nz

APPENDIX

Category	Topic Number	Auditor's Recommendation	Comments from Te Rua Mahara
Governance	1: IM Strategy	*Finalise and implement the Strategy and ensure it informs the IM work programme and meets business needs.*	Once finalised the Strategy will provide direction and impetus for improvement of IM.
Governance	2: IM Policy and Processes	*Include IM roles and responsibilities in the Policy.*	This also covers the recommendation for Topic 4: *IM Integration into Business Processes*. Documenting roles and responsibilities is a good starting point to support understanding of requirements across the organisation. Induction and refresher training as necessary, and monitoring are also needed to ensure good support for staff to manage information well.
Governance	5: Outsourced Functions and Collaborative Arrangements	*Include IM roles and responsibilities in contracts for outsourced functions and collaborative agreements.*	Improvement needed for this area of IM is acknowledged. Requirements for managing information created within contracts is essential for all parties to understand and meet their responsibilities.
Governance	7: Self-Monitoring	*Develop a process to regularly monitor IM against the PRA, standards and other relevant legislation.*	Regular reporting to the IMSGG and ES will help raise awareness of trends and issues for improvement.
Capability	8: Capacity and Capability	*Regularly assess IM capability and capacity including resourcing business as usual and initiatives to deliver the Strategy.*	With IM responsibility largely with the teams and with 80 data assistants there still needs to be central direction, support and monitoring to ensure consistent trusted IM practice.

Category	Topic Number	Auditor's Recommendation	Comments from Te Rua Mahara
Capability	9: IM Roles and Responsibilities	*Assess the need for mandatory IM training and deliver a programme to meet the identified needs ensuring contractors are included.*	Mandatory training is important in establishing expectations and consistency of practice.
Creation	11: High-Value/High-Risk Information	*Finalise identifying and recording all high-value/high-risk information assets in the IAR.*	This work can be done in conjunction with the DA and will help prioritise IM.
Access	18: Information Access, Use and Sharing	*Identify improvements for the taxonomy to ensure that staff have a consistent experience with SharePoint across the organistion.*	This may also be an issue for iPlant but issues should be further investigated in the light of the recent update as noted in Topic 10: *Creation and Capture of Information.*
Disposal	21: Implementation of Disposal Decisions	*Develop a plan to ensure disposal actions are routinely carried out and that include disposal against the new sector-wide CRI DA.*	An agreed plan will ensure that disposal is implemented which will see the benefit of the work done on the development of the DA.