

Australian Standard™

**Information and documentation—  
Records management processes—  
Metadata for records**

**Part 1: Principles**

This Australian Standard was prepared by Committee IT-021, Records Management Systems. It was approved on behalf of the Council of Standards Australia on 7 October 2004.  
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The following are represented on Committee IT-021:

Australian Society of Archivists  
Council of Federal State and Territory Archives  
Department of Education & Training (NSW)  
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade  
Institute for Information Management  
Monash University  
Public Record Office Victoria  
Records Management Association of Australasia  
State Records (NSW)  
The Institute of Internal Auditors—Australia

Additional Interests:

Australian Broadcasting Authority  
Enterprise Knowledge  
Fuji Xerox Australia Pty Ltd  
KPMG  
Monash University  
National Archives of Australia  
Recordkeeping Systems Pty Ltd  
Sutherland Shire Council  
The University of Sydney

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Records management processes—  
Metadata for records**

**Part 1: Principles**

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## PREFACE

This Standard was prepared by the Australian members of the Joint Standards Australia/Standards New Zealand Committee IT-021 Records Management Systems. After consultation with stakeholders in both countries, Standards Australia and Standards New Zealand decided to develop this Standard as an Australian Standard rather than an Australian/New Zealand Standard.

This Standard is identical with, and has been reproduced from, ISO 23081-1:2004, *Information and documentation—Records management processes—Metadata for records—Part 1: Principles*.

Committee IT-021 provides input to the ISO Committee, ISO/TC 46/SC 1 on Archives/Records Management, in the preparation of this Standard.

The objective of this Standard is to provide individuals or organizations who are responsible for record creation, capture and record management with a framework for creating, managing and using records management metadata and explains the principles that govern them.

Standards Australia wish to thank the following organizations for their contribution enabling Australia's participation in the development of International Standards in the area of Records Management. International Standards in turn become national standards to be used in Australian industries.

- Australian Society of Archivists
- Fuji Xerox Australia
- Monash University
- National Archives of Australia
- Public Record Office Victoria
- Recall Total Information Management
- Records Management Association of Australia

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References to International Standards should be replaced by references to Australian or Australian/New Zealand Standards, as follows:

<i>Reference to International Standard</i>		<i>Australian Standard</i>	
ISO		AS ISO	
15489	Information and documentation— Records management	15489	Records management
15489-1	Part 1: General	15489.1	Part 1: General

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## INTRODUCTION

ISO 23081 is a guide to understanding, implementing and using metadata within the framework of ISO 15489, *Information and documentation — Records management*. It addresses the relevance of records management metadata in business processes and the different roles and types of metadata that support business and records management processes<sup>1)</sup>. It also sets a framework for managing those metadata.

It does not define a mandatory set of records management metadata to be implemented, since these metadata will differ in detail according to organizational or specific requirements for jurisdiction. However, it assesses the main existing metadata sets in line with the requirements of ISO 15489.

This Technical Specification sets a framework for creating, managing and using records management metadata and explains the principles that govern them.

The proposed Parts 2 and 3 will be more explanatory and provide practical guidance on implementation issues and how to use existing metadata sets. These future Parts will be Technical Reports that should be considered as time-bound documents that will need regular updates.

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1) In this Technical Specification, business and business activity are used as broad terms, not restricted to commercial activity, but including public administration, non-profit and other activities.

AUSTRALIAN STANDARD

## Information and documentation—Records management processes—Metadata for records

### Part 1: Principles

#### 1 Scope

This part of ISO 23081 covers the principles that underpin and govern records management metadata.

#### 2 Normative references

The following referenced documents are indispensable for the application of this document. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

ISO 15489-1:2001, *Information and documentation — Records management — Part 1: General*

#### 3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the terms and definitions given in ISO 15489-1 and the following apply.

##### 3.1

##### **agent**

individual, workgroup or organization responsible for or involved in record creation, capture and/or records management processes

##### 3.2

##### **qualifier**

refinement of an element defining its semantics or values

##### 3.3

##### **schema**

framework that specifies and describes a standard set of metadata elements and their interrelationships

NOTE Schemas provide a formal syntax (or structure) and semantics (or definitions) for the metadata elements

#### 4 Records management metadata

Records management metadata is an inextricable part of records management, serving a variety of functions and purposes. In a records management context, metadata are defined as data describing the context, content and structure of records and their management through time (ISO 15489-1:2001, 3.12). As such, metadata are structured or semi-structured information that enables the creation, registration, classification, access, preservation and disposition of records through time and within and across domains. Each of these domains represents an area of intellectual discourse and of social and/or organizational activity with a distinctive or limited group of people who share certain values and knowledge. Records management metadata can be used to identify, authenticate and contextualize records and the people, processes and systems that create, manage, maintain and use them and the policies that govern them (see 9.1).

Initially, metadata define the record at its point of capture, fixing the record into its business context and establishing management control over it. During the existence of records or their aggregates, new layers of