

**SAM – INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**  
**(California Technology Agency)**

**DEFINITIONS**

**4900.1**

(Reviewed 03/11)

**Agency Information Management Strategy.** An agency's information management strategy is the agency's comprehensive plan for using information technology to address its business needs, i.e., to successfully carry out its programmatic mission. Ideally, the agency's information management strategy represents one aspect of a well-defined overall agency business strategy and is therefore closely aligned to its business strategy. If the agency has not established a business strategy, agency staff who are responsible for the agency information management strategy must make assumptions based on their knowledge of the agency's overall mission, its program resources and priorities, and the changing nature of its environment.

**Business Strategy.** An agency's business strategy is its overall plan for accomplishing its mission in a changing environment with the resources it can reasonably expect to be available. Such a strategy typically addresses the agency's statutory mission and historical role, the expectations of its key stakeholders (individuals and organizations that affect the agency or that the agency affects), the factors that are critical to its success as an organization, the agency's internal strengths and weaknesses, and the political, social, economic, and technological forces in its environment that support or constrain its programs. Business strategies articulate the key issues that must be successfully addressed by the agency and identify the priorities and required resources for proposed actions. A strategy may have a time frame that is as short as a few months, if there is a limited window of opportunity for significant change. However, most agency business strategies present a three- to five-year perspective, with some agencies finding it useful to extend their strategic vision as much as ten to twenty years into the future. Strategic planning is not a one-time effort; it is a fundamental, continuing management process that allows the agency to respond in an effective manner to a changing environment.

**Information Technology Infrastructure.** An agency's information technology infrastructure is the base or foundation for the delivery of information to support the agency's programs and management. The infrastructure contains elements upon which an agency's information technology activities are dependent. An agency must therefore define, implement, and manage these infrastructure elements to successfully employ information technology.

The desirable characteristics of this infrastructure are efficient support for the exchange of information within the agency and between the agency and other organizations; reliable availability of information processing capabilities whenever and wherever they are needed; preservation of the integrity and confidentiality of information maintained by the agency; sufficient flexibility to allow the timely and efficient addition of new information management capabilities and modifications of established capabilities; and consistency with a coherent set of technical and managerial standards for the employment of information technology.

Typical elements in an information technology infrastructure include:

**Application Systems.** The applications that an agency purchases and/or develops to achieve personal productivity and program support benefits.

**Architecture.** The guidelines or blueprints that an agency follows in designing, acquiring, and implementing information technology solutions. Organizationally approved definitions, specifications, and standards are the primary components in an agency's information technology architecture.

**Communications.** Local area and wide area network components, including linkages with other organizations.

**Equipment.** An agency's hardware platforms and components ranging from individual personal computers to mainframes and associated peripherals.

**Facilities.** The electrical, ventilation, fire suppression, physical security, wiring, and other components required to support an agency's information technology capability, including the physical structure itself.

**(Continued)**

**SAM – INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY  
(California Technology Agency)**

**DEFINITIONS**

**4900.1 (Cont 1)**

(Reviewed 03/11)

**Funding.** Current and projected funding for information technology planning, acquisition, development, and operations activities.

**Partnerships.** Relationships with other public and private sector organizations that support and enable the agency's pursuit and use of information technology.

**People.** An agency's technical staff, user community groups, and executive steering and oversight committees that are charged with information technology planning, approval, development, management, operations, and security responsibilities.

**Plans.** Detailed designs or methods for aligning information technology activities with agency business strategies and accomplishing business objectives. Typical agency information technology plans include strategic, risk management, and operational recovery.

**Policies.** The rules, conventions, and protocols adopted by the agency to govern the pursuit and use of information technology.

**Processes and Procedures.** The defined steps for planning, approving, acquiring, developing, operating, maintaining, enhancing, and using information technology within the agency.

**Service Definitions.** The types of services provided, accepted service levels, and service delivery time frames established for an agency's information technology support organization.

**Software.** The set of operating system, utility, communications, user interface, and management programs that enable users to operate and control computers and develop application systems.

The infrastructure includes elements owned by the agency and available under contract or through interagency agreement. For agencies that employ the services of a consolidated data center, for example, the required data center resources are considered part of the agency's infrastructure.

**Reengineering the Business Process.** The search for, and implementation of, radical changes in business processes that result in dramatic efficiencies, reductions in turnaround time, improvements in quality, or improvements in customer service.

**Strategic Planning Process for Information Technology.** The process of aligning agency plans for, and uses of, information technology with the agency's business strategies.