

Improved discovery, delivery access – what else can metadata do for you?

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Changes in technology, human expectations, volume of data and information are bringing significant new challenges for the world. Due to the deluge of data, humans cannot rely on their ability to efficiently process and understand available resources any longer in a timely manner. Internet search engines (e.g. Google) are now common ways that people are discovering data and information for their daily use. Budget constraints are also increasing demand for data re-use and re-purposing for information providers. The same constraints are increasing demand from consumers to maximise efficiency in discovering and selecting relevant resources. Well described and standardised metadata supports many of these challenges.

However, metadata is a very complex subject. It has multiple continuously evolving standards, which varies across those that are community defined (e.g. DC2020), internationally defined (e.g. ISO, OGC) and, more recently, Internet-related (e.g. DCAT, schema.org). Commonly data custodians and producers use multiple practices, tools, and interpretations of standards that makes integration of metadata difficult, inconsistent and, in some cases, prevents resource discovery for wider groups of consumers.

The ANZLIC/ICSM Metadata working Group (MDWG) aims to support a wider understanding and consistent application of location information metadata, based on agreed standards. Importantly, its focus to provide consistency in application of metadata standards and mapping between different metadata standards.

The MDWG, consisting of the Federal and Jurisdictional Governments, Research organisations and Academia, targets to:

- Improve data discoverability by enabling machine-to-machine access and integration across disciplines using common exchange format
- Reduce costs due to the ability to reuse and share developed codes, applications and services
- Improve efficiency through client self-service
- Reduce business risk and liability through clear identification of licencing and security compliance

Major focus of the MDWG is on engagement with spatial communities throughout Australia to:

- Advise on best practices for managing and recording metadata and associated tools
- Provide a forum for inward and outward communication between international and national interest groups
- Develop and publish metadata best practices, relevant vocabularies, cross-walks, supporting documentation and tools

REFERENCES

1. ICSM Metadata Working Group. Available from: <https://www.icsm.gov.au/what-we-do/metadata-working-group>