

GO-ITS 23.1 – Government of Ontario Public Web Standard

Government of Ontario IT Standard (GO-ITS)

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Foreword

Government of Ontario Information Technology Standards (GO-ITS) are the official publications on the guidelines, preferred practices, standards and technical reports adopted by the Information Technology Standards Council (ITSC) under delegated authority of the Management Board of Cabinet (MBC). These publications support the responsibilities of the Management Board Secretariat (MBS) for coordinating standardization of Information & Information Technology (I&IT) in the Government of Ontario. Publications that set new or revised standards provide enterprise architecture guidance, policy guidance and administrative information for their implementation. In particular, GO-ITS describe where the application of a standard is mandatory and specify any qualifications governing the implementation of standards.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background and Purpose

This standard is designed to help ministries and agencies with the development of their websites. It defines the requirements for the technical design and development of government sites. It provides a framework for access to government information through the World Wide Web information network to provide a consistent, accessible, reliable and dependable presence for the Government of Ontario.

Purpose

This GOITS defines directions in the areas of corporate functionality, usability and responsibility for ministries implementing websites for access to government information through the World Wide Web:

1. Mandatory requirements for ministries and agencies;
2. Guidelines outlining directions that should be followed unless there are compelling reasons;
3. Preferred practices to better help ministries and agencies position themselves for the future.

The objectives of the standard are to:

1. Ensure a consistent and positive web experience between the public and the government of Ontario;
2. Define quality Web standards to ensure maximum accessibility and usability to government information and services;
3. Protect and enforce the government's legal and security interests.

1.2 Applicability Statements

1.2.1 Organization

Government of Ontario IT Standards and Enterprise Products apply (are mandatory) for use by all ministries/clusters and to all former Schedule I and IV provincial government agencies under their present classification (Advisory, Regulatory, Adjudicative, Operational Service, Operational Enterprise, Trust or Crown Foundation) according to the current agency classification system.

Kindly refer to http://intra.pmed.mbs.gov.on.ca/mbc/pdf/Agency_Establishment&Accountability-Dir.pdf for a list of provincial government agencies with their classification under the current classification system, as well as their previous Schedule under the former Schedule system.

Additionally, this applies to any other new or existing [agencies designated by Management Board of Cabinet](#) as being subject to such publications, i.e. the [GO-ITS](#) publications and mandatory [Enterprise Products](#) - and particularly applies to Advisory, Regulatory, and Adjudicative Agencies (see also procurement link, [OPS paragraph](#)). Further included is any agency which, under the terms of its Memorandum of Understanding with its responsible Minister, is required to satisfy the

mandatory requirements set out in any of the Management Board of Cabinet Directives (*cf.* Operational Service, Operational Enterprise, Trust, or Crown Foundation Agencies).

As new GO-IT standards are approved, they are deemed mandatory on a go-forward basis (Go-forward basis means at the next available project development or procurement opportunity).

When implementing or adopting any GO ITSC standards or GO ITSC standards updates, ministries and I&IT Cluster must follow their organization's pre-approved policies and practices for ensuring that adequate change control, change management and risk mitigation mechanisms are in place and employed.

For the purposes of this document, any reference to ministries or the Government includes applicable agencies.

1.2.2 Other

This standard provides a framework for access to government information through the World Wide Web information network. This standard covers an area where new technologies are emerging rapidly and this version of the standard is in effect only until such time as it is revised.

Design/Look & Feel standards are now managed and provided by Cabinet Office New Media Communications ('Corporate Design Standards') and are not addressed in this revised standard.

Related Documents

GO-ITS 43 Web Metadata Standard - Defines the metadata requirements for Government of Ontario web resources.

GO Corporate Design Standards [replaces July 1999 version] – This Style Guide is produced by Cabinet New Media Office and outlines the visual representation of the Government of Ontario on the Internet. The Ontario Government style guide is accompanied by individual ministry style guides produced in conjunction with [Cabinet New Media](http://intra.newmedia.cab.gov.on.ca/) < http://intra.newmedia.cab.gov.on.ca/>

GO-ITS 23.3 Internet Web Application Interface – Defines the user-interface standards for Government of Ontario web applications. This standard applies to Internet and Extranet sites.

1.3 Impacts to Existing Standards

GO-ITS/GO-SPP Number	Describe Impact	Recommended Action (alternatively provide a page number where details can be found)
GO-ITS 23.2 Internet World Wide Web Content.	This standard is no longer relevant nor current. Some points are addressed in the revisions to GO-ITS 23.1 and the rest falls under the domain of CAB Communications and will be addressed by their Corporate Design standards.	Retire GO-ITS 23.2

1.4 Impacts to Existing Environment

Impacted Infrastructure (includes Common Components and other applications)	Describe Impact	Recommended Action (alternatively provide a page number where details can be found)
Not applicable	N/A	N/A

1.5 Requirements Levels

GO-ITS and GO-SPP documents may combine mandatory and non-mandatory information as required to effectively describe the requirements of a standard or standards procurement profile. Therefore, it is important to indicate clearly when a requirement is mandatory.

Where indicated throughout this document, the words "MUST", "MUST NOT", "SHOULD", "SHOULD NOT", and "MAY" are to be interpreted as described below:

MUST

This word, or the terms "REQUIRED" or "SHALL", means that the definition is an absolute requirement of the specification.

Please Note: New standards or standards procurement profiles are NOT retroactive although they MUST be complied with at the next procurement or project opportunity.

MUST NOT

This phrase, or the phrase "SHALL NOT", means that the definition is an absolute prohibition of the specification.

SHOULD

This word, or the adjective "RECOMMENDED", means that there may exist valid reasons in particular circumstances to ignore a particular item, but the full implications must be understood and carefully weighed before choosing a different course.

Please Note: The word "SHOULD" is considered a preferred practice that may have already been vetted, may be advantageous to use and may expedite the approval process.

SHOULD NOT

This phrase, or the phrase "NOT RECOMMENDED" means that there may exist valid reasons in particular circumstances when the particular behaviour is acceptable or even useful, but the full implications should be understood and the case carefully weighed before implementing any behaviour described with this label.

MAY

This word, or the adjective "OPTIONAL", means that an item is truly optional. One vendor may choose to include the item because a particular marketplace requires it or because the vendor

feels that it enhances the product while another vendor may omit the same item. An implementation that does not include a particular option **MUST** be prepared to interoperate with another implementation that does include the option, though perhaps with reduced functionality. In the same vein an implementation that does include a particular option **MUST** be prepared to interoperate with another implementation that does not include the option (except, of course, for the feature the option provides.)

1.6 Recommended Versioning and/or Change Management

This standard provides a framework for access to government information through the World Wide Web information network. This standard covers an area where new technologies are emerging rapidly and this version of the standard is in effect only until such time as it is revised.

This standard should be revised every 3 years to ensure its currency, or prior to that time if required by changes to technology or infrastructure.

This standard is owned by the e-Government Branch (OCCS) under the custodianship of the Federation Standards and Guidance Coordinator. Revisions to the standard are managed and lead by the coordinator in consultation with GO-Web Committee and Cabinet Office (CO). Working groups are formed to revise standards.

1.7 Publication Details

Check One	Web Site for Publication
<input type="checkbox"/>	ITSC Web Site at http://intra.itsc.gov.on.ca (Available to the OPS)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	GO-ITS Web Site at http://www.itstandards.gov.on.ca (Available to the public)

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1.9 Acknowledgements

A working group was formed to review the GO-ITS 23.1 web standards. This group was composed of web experts from ministries and clusters across GO-Web. Contributors provided input and comments on the standards. However, edits to the actual document were made and managed solely by the Federation Standards and Guidance Coordinator.

The Cabinet Office New Media Communications Team responsible for the branding of Government of Ontario sites (Look & Feel Standards) were consulted and had input to the revised standards.

The final draft also went to SADWG for review and comment regarding privacy and security, as well as to Access and Privacy.

Final drafts were made available to GO-Web Committee for their review/comments on the GO-Web site [<http://intra.webmaster.gov.on.ca>].

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<input type="checkbox"/>	Corporate ACT		
Domains			
<input type="checkbox"/>	BADWG		
<input type="checkbox"/>	IADWG		
<input type="checkbox"/>	AADWG		
√	SADWG		2005-12-08
<input type="checkbox"/>	TADWG		
Infrastructure			
<input type="checkbox"/>	OCCSD, iSERV ONTARIO		

Security			
□	OCCIO, CSB		
Standards			
√	CASB, Technical Standards		2006-01-12
√	IT Standards Council		2006-02-15
Strategy			
√	OCCS, SPPM		2005-11-10
Others			
√	Cabinet Office New Media Communications		2005-12-08
√	Access and Privacy Office		2005-12-12

2. Technical Standards and Specifications

0. INTRODUCTION

This standard applies to Government of Ontario Internet and Extranet websites. The scope of this document is not limited to the current or named technologies.

This standard is designed to help ministries and agencies with the development of their websites. It provides mandatory standards that must be followed, and guidelines and preferred practices that should be followed.

The World Wide Web is a constantly growing information network. Unlike some Internet services, websites are kept up to date, are easy to use, and attract a lot of attention.

The web is, for a growing number of Ontarians, their preferred communications and service delivery channel. It is the most popular means of soliciting feedback from the public, from both the government's and the public's perspective, because it is:

- Easy to use,
- Cost effective, and
- Nearly 24-7 access to information and services.

It has become the most important information distribution channel for the government. This standard deals with how to set up your website to provide a consistent, accessible, reliable and dependable presence for the Ontario Government.

If you are using the web, be aware of the following:

- **There are important security issues.** Consult with Corporate Security about your Internet plans and always virus check downloaded files;
- The web is "up-to-date". If you want to provide a website, you must make the commitment and provide the resources to keep the information current;
- Ministries must comply with the Government Publications Directive;
- All Ontario government information published on the web is covered by Crown copyright. It is very difficult to enforce copyright, so do not put up material that you may wish to sell, unless you can supply it in such a way that it has little value to a commercial user in the form it is presented;
- There are **costing issues** associated with Internet services; again please speak with iSERV ONTARIO for the latest information on costs;
- All legislation which applies to print publications applies to publishing websites on the Internet, such as: the French Languages Services Act, the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act;
- Only approved information for the public must be placed in the publicly accessible areas of the network.

Part of this standard is the **requirement to use shared resources**. Ministry of Government Services (MGS) maintains the resource libraries of government wide resources for others to use. You can add your materials to these libraries, by sending them to the GO Web Committee Webmaster so they may be shared with others.

The GO Web Committee will deal with enterprise web-related issues on an on-going basis. The Committee maintains a website <<http://intra.goweb.gov.on.ca/index.html>> which includes material supporting this standard and information as to whom to contact with questions about this standard and other web-related matters. In preparing French translations for Websites, use of the ONTERM website <<http://www.onterm.gov.on.ca>> will allow consistent translation of government terminology.

1. MANDATORY

The following sections apply to all home and interior pages of a website. Splash pages are addressed specifically in Section 1.3.

MGS develops and maintains a shared resource library for all mandatory resource elements (e.g. privacy, copyright information, disclaimer notices, graphics). This library is read only and is maintained by the GO Web Committee Webmaster.

1.1 Look and Feel

- 1.1.1 Government of Ontario sites must follow the 'Look and Feel' standards and individual ministry style guides provided by Cabinet Office.

1.2 Footer

The following footer elements must be applied to every individual page in order to maintain consistency:

- 1.2.1 The standard Ontario footer logo/graphic as provided in the shared resource library:
- 1.2.2 A link entitled "[Privacy](#)" pointing to the Government of Ontario Online Privacy Statement on the central site must be included in the footer, and on any page (including applications) that collects personal information (see 1.8.1).
- 1.2.3 A link entitled "[Important Notices](#)" regarding external links disclaimers must be included in the footer. It is strongly recommended this be a link to the centrally maintained page on the Government of Ontario website.
- 1.2.4 Copyright notice "© Queen's Printer for Ontario, xxxx" [where xxxx is the year of first publication] and link to the centrally maintained [copyright notice](#) on the Government of Ontario website.
- 1.2.5 The footer must include a "Last Modified" date, which provides information on the currency of the content. The date should reflect the date the editorial content was changed. The date format is: month day, year (e.g. April 1, 2005).
- 1.2.6 Footers must include links to the home page, contact page, site map page, the alternate language link (English/Français), 'Ontario.ca' link, and, where available, a Help page.

1.3 Splash or Landing Pages

- 1.3.1 They must display the bilingual Ontario footer Logo (as provided in the shared resource library), site name and copyright notice.
- 1.3.2 They must provide an option for the user to select the "English" or "Français" version of the site.

Note: Where an exemption to the French Language Act has been granted, or a version in one of the official languages is temporarily unavailable, the link to that language will lead to a disclaimer page. The wording for these disclaimers will be kept and maintained in the shared resource library.

- 1.3.3 All text/graphics on splash pages must be bilingual (English/French).

1.4 Accessibility

Important Note: W3C is widely considered the international leader in defining accessibility guidelines. The Government of Ontario is following W3C Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 1.0, Priority 1 and 2 <<http://www.w3.org/WAI>>. Go to the GO-Web site <<http://intra.goweb.gov.on.ca>> for further information and helpful links and guides. **Following the W3C WCAG guidelines, the requirements of this standard and the advice on the GO-Web site will help make websites more accessible to persons with disabilities, consistent with the requirements of the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act*. The requirements and advice, however, are not interpretations of the Act and do not define requirements for compliance with the Act.**

- 1.4.1 Sites must meet ALL Priority 1 and 2 checkpoints in the W3C Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 1.0.
- 1.4.2 Sites must support, function and display legibly in the list of browsers maintained by MGS in the shared resource library.
- 1.4.3 Sites must support the screen resolution sizes outlined by MGS in the shared resource library.
- 1.4.4 Website templates must be designed without horizontal scrolling at the supported screen resolution (as indicated in the shared resource library).
- Under limited circumstances, certain content restrictions (e.g. complex charts and tables) may require horizontal scrolling to preserve the integrity of the information, but this is discouraged as a general practice.
- 1.4.5 Where available, TTY ([TeleTYpewriter](#)) numbers must be displayed, preferably alongside other telephone numbers.
- 1.4.6 Text equivalents (e.g. ALT, LONGDESC) for every non-text element in a page must be provided. The preferred method for tagging images that are decorative only is alt="" [no space between the quotes].
- 1.4.7 Where possible, CSS (Cascading Style Sheets) must be used to control style and layout.
- Use CSS code that is compatible with the MGS list of supported browsers.
 - Pages should still be readable when CSS is disabled.
- 1.4.8 Hyperlink text should be meaningful and implemented in such a way as to make sense when taken out of context. (e.g. don't use "Click Here")
- 1.4.9 Pages must be tested to ensure accessibility. Testing tools and techniques will be available in the shared resource library.

1.5 Usability

- 1.5.1 A "Contact Us" page, providing a feedback form, must be available on every site. The contact information must include a telephone number, TTY number (where applicable), FAX number, email address, and link to the centrally maintained Government of Ontario telephone directory (INFOGO).
- 1.5.2 A site map must be provided to allow users to quickly locate information.
- 1.5.3 Framed sites are strongly discouraged and present accessibility/usage challenges. But where they exist, they must be searchable by the main Government of Ontario search engine, print properly and navigable from any entry point.
- 1.5.4 Unvisited links must not be coloured purple. Visited links must not be coloured blue.
- 1.5.5 To ensure hyperlinks stand out, link text must be underlined when embedded within content (e.g. links within paragraphs of text).

- 1.5.6 Underlined text must not be used, other than for hyperlinks.
- 1.5.7 Links to alternate English or French content must be in that language (e.g. If the document is also available in French, the hyperlink indicating this should be in French.)
- 1.5.8 Where compelling reasons require a separate version (e.g. HTML/TEXT) of a site, or site sections, to permit greater accessibility, each page must link directly to the corresponding content in the alternate version. In the case where 1-to-1 links cannot be made due to technology restrictions, the links must go to the main entry page of the alternate version.

1.6 Metadata

- 1.6.1 Sites must comply with the approved GO-ITS Web Metadata Standard. See GO-Web site for the latest version, or IT Standards site [www.itstandards.gov.on.ca].
- 1.6.2 A descriptive Title Tag must be included in the header section <head> of every page, and must be unique to that page.

Recommended format of the Title tag is: document title | Government of Ontario

1.7 French content

The French Language Services Act applies to web publishing on public sites. French content should be posted simultaneously with the English content. For exemptions, check with your ministry's French Language Services Coordinator.

- 1.7.1 Language links (English/Français) must link directly to corresponding content in the alternate language.

For specialized or customized applications (e.g. portals), contact MGS e-Government Branch.
- 1.7.2 When a French version does not exist, the link to French content will lead to an approved disclaimer page.

The use of disclaimers concerning the unavailability of a French equivalent must be authorized by your ministry or agency French Language Services Coordinator. Standard disclaimers are available on the GO-Web site.
- 1.7.3 When there is a delay (e.g. due to translation) in posting the French version of a document, the disclaimer must indicate when the French version will be available. (e.g. La version française de ce document sera disponible dans 2 jours.)

1.8 Privacy

Note: A [Privacy Impact Assessment \(PIA\)](#) may be required for your web application. Contact your Cluster for information and assistance, or the MGS Access and Privacy Office (416-327-0002). All relevant OPS I&IT Security Standards and Policies on privacy and security apply (<http://intra.security.gov.on.ca/resources/default.asp>).

- 1.8.1 A collection of personal information notice must be provided wherever personal information is requested (e.g. at the bottom of a form where information is collected). Contact your FIPPA Coordinator for appropriate wording.

Minimum requirements: The relevant legislation citing statutory right to collect information must be named, as well as information on how the information is being used and stored, 3rd party disclaimer, and FIPPA Coordinator contact info.

- 1.8.2 Only information that is indispensable to provide a service may be made mandatory when collecting personal information.
- 1.8.3 Do not use cookies to store or access sensitive or personal information, see the Corporate Operating Policy on Tracking Technologies (<http://www.accessandprivacy.gov.on.ca/english/pub/tracking.html>).

1.9 Search

- 1.9.1 The Federated Search Service is required for all Government of Ontario websites. Each site may have local (site-only) and must have global (government-wide) search options. Use the required Federated Search Service templates.
- 1.9.2 All main sections in Government of Ontario websites must be book-markable and all sites must be able to be indexed by the Federated Search Service.

1.10 Reporting

- 1.10.1 New websites, or change to domain names, and launch dates must be reported to GO-Web. (Program areas should contact their Ministry Web Coordinator)
- 1.10.2 For each website, identify to the GO-Web the following: Manager/Owner, Primary Content and Primary Technical. Where available, a backup contact person should be provided in case the primary contact is unavailable. When personnel changes, ensure information is updated.
- 1.10.3 All website usage must be tracked by owners and reports must be made available to GO-Web. Page visits, unique visitors, user session and bandwidth statistics for each site must be included in the reports. (e.g. By providing a link to WebTrends reports)
- 1.10.4 Decommissioned sites must be reported to GO-Web.

1.11 Linkages

- 1.11.1 All linkages must be audited on a regular basis to check they go to the expected document and to ensure they do not link to inappropriate pages.
- 1.11.2 Broken-link checks must be done regularly. (Recommended at least once a week.)

1.12 Use of Other Formats

Note: All relevant GO-ITS standards, directives and acts -- Metadata Standards, FLA, Privacy,

VID, and W3C Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 1.0, etc. -- apply to **all formats** used on the web (MS Office, PDF, Flash and other multi-media).

- 1.12.1 Proprietary formats requiring users to purchase plug-ins/software are not permitted.
- 1.12.2 Wherever a format is used that requires a plug-in (e.g., Adobe Acrobat Reader, RealPlayer) a link to the plug-in or to a "Help" page must be provided on the page.
- 1.12.3 Links to other formats must identify the file format used. E.g. 'Brochure (PDF)'
- 1.12.4 Where other formats are used, items must be properly tagged. (e.g. must provide proper Metadata so documents are searchable by search engine).

When posting any MS Office documents, be sure to clear any document properties (e.g. remove track changes or comments).

1.13 PDF documents

W3C approved accessible technologies are the preferred web format (e.g. HTML). [PDFs](#) may be used **in addition** to these technologies.

- 1.13.1 Where information is available only in PDF, because of valid legal or security restrictions, ensure it is accessible using Adobe accessibility tools and resources. You must also provide a contact (Tel. number or email) where people can request the information in an alternate accessible format.

1.14 Flash

- 1.14.1 Where Flash is used, it must be created with a version that allows for maximum accessibility (see shared resource library). The same accessibility guidelines apply to Flash. (See W3C Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 1.0).

For example:

- text and other items must be presented in a way that will be accessible to the user
- captions must be provided for the hearing impaired
- audio descriptions should provide details unavailable to the vision impaired
- keyboard access must be programmed to give users full functionality
- information must not be conveyed solely through colour.

- 1.14.2 Sites/Content should be fully accessible and functional without Flash. An alternative HTML or other accessible option should be made available. In the case of flash banners, an accessible placeholder should display when Flash is not available. A link to the Flash plug-in must be provided as per 1.13.2.

1.15 Audio/Video

For audio/video files refer to the W3C Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 1.0 for making these accessible.

- 1.15.1 Where an audio/video presentation is used strictly for entertainment value, the user must have the option of navigating through or skipping the flash presentation.
- 1.15.2 Video must be available at least in Windows Media or Flash. Where possible, it should be available in more than one format (e.g. Windows Media, Flash and Real Player).
Reminder: Plug-ins or versions that must be purchased are not permitted.
- 1.15.3 Include equivalent information to the visual or auditory content:
- Provide text equivalents of non-text content (images, pre-recorded audio, video) until user agents can automatically read aloud the text equivalent of a visual track, provide an auditory description of the important information of the visual track of a multimedia presentation.
 - For any time-based multimedia presentation (e.g., a movie or animation), synchronize equivalent alternatives (e.g., captions or auditory descriptions of the visual track) with the presentation.
 - Ensure that all information conveyed with colour is also available without color.

2. GUIDELINES

To ensure maximum web accessibility, it's recommended sites follow as many Priority 3 checkpoints as possible (in addition to the mandatory Priority 1 and 2) of the W3C Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 1.0 [<http://www.w3.org/WAI>]

2.1. Usability features

- 2.1.1. There should be a maximum of 5 "clicks" to the final data from the home page.
- 2.1.3 Graphics should be optimized for legibility and download size. Refer to MGS list of authorized graphic types.
- 2.1.4 Use forms, rather than mailto: URLs for collecting feedback and directing customer e-mails.
- 2.1.5 An e-mail address should appear on forms, unless there is a valid reason to hide the destination email address, and accompany mailto: links.
- 2.1.6 Frames should not be used except in a Web application. Entire sites should not be framed and frames should not be used for site navigation.
- 2.1.7 Ensure pages print properly.
- 2.1.8 Avoid overuse of ALL CAPITALS and *italicized text*, which can be difficult to read.
- 2.1.9 Where other formats are used (e.g. Word, PDF), file size must be indicated within the hypertext link. For example: [Document Title \[PDF-2MB\]](#)
- 2.1.10 A link that returns the user to the top of the page should be included at the bottom of pages that require vertical scrolling.
- 2.1.11 A "Help" page should be available providing instructions on how to use certain features or services (e.g. portals) with a link to contact information. This section should also inform users of any proprietary formats used on the website and how to access any required plug-in software (this may link to a common "Help" page on the central site)

Supporting document: Internet Web Application Interface Standards.

2.2 PDF Documents

- 2.2.1 Where [PDFs](#) are used, an effort should be made to make them as accessible as possible regardless if a text version is available.
- 2.2.2 PDF documents should be saved in the lowest version possible (without degrading the document or security requirement) to prevent users from having to download the latest versions of the software.
- 2.2.3 Where PDFs are available in English and French, include the title (in that language) and link to the alternate language versions within the PDF document.

2.3 Expiration

- 2.3.1 If there is an expiry date in the metadata information, add an expiry date below the "Last modified" section in the footer.

2.4 Navigation

- 2.4.1 When using a "breadcrumb", all of the items in the breadcrumb trail (except the current page) should function as links.
- 2.4.2 Where possible, customize 404 pages using plain language rather than using the default 404 error page. These should be accessible, and bilingual wherever possible.
- 2.4.3 When using redirects, inform the user about the change and provide the new URL before redirecting them. (Use server-side redirects according to W3C guidelines).
- 2.4.4 When removing or moving popular documents, post in its place a temporary page informing the user of the fact and where or how they may access the information (if applicable).

2.6 Linkages

- 2.6.1 Clearly identify links to non-Government of Ontario websites (See example in the shared resource library).
- 2.6.2 When referring to plug-ins, add a Help link which will point to a centrally-maintained listing about plug-ins with information about the software, useful explanations and links. If a plug-in is not listed on the Help page, please contact MGS to have the item added.

2.7 Multilingual documents

- 2.7.1 Use Unicode for multi-lingual web pages that cannot be displayed using western character sets (e.g. Japanese, Korean, Arabic). There are several versions of Unicode, but UTF-8 is most widely supported. (For more information or help, go to the shared

resource library.)

- 2.7.2 Links to other languages should also be provided in that language. This should be done within brackets following the link.

Examples:

(Within text--) This document is also [available in Mandarin](#) (中國)
-- with the translation of this reusable statement following in brackets in Mandarin, or with the actual document name appearing as a link in Mandarin.

(In a list--) This information is available in the following languages:

[Français](#)
[Mandarin \[中國\]](#)
[Japanese \[日本\]](#)
[Greek \[Ελλάδα\]](#)

3. BEST PRACTICES

- 3.1.1 Ministries are encouraged to share their owned image/graphic library with other ministries/agencies through the shared use of the Photo Library.
- 3.1.2 Ministries are encouraged to share scripts, programs, coding with other ministries/agencies through the GO-Web shared resource library.
- 3.1.3 Ministries are encouraged to apply these standards where relevant when developing their Intranet sites to maximize usability and accessibility.

4. EXEMPTIONS

Consult with MGS or Cabinet Office for exemptions to any of these mandatory standards.

5. RELATED STANDARDS

The following standards are referenced and form part of this standard:

- GO-ITS 43 Web Metadata Standard
- GO Corporate Design Standards (CO New Media Communications)
- GO-ITS 24.3 - Internet Web Application Interface

GLOSSARY

- 1 **Copyright:** The copyright year refers to the year the item was first published. It does not change with the year since it indicates when copyright protection of the work began. If the content of the work has been significantly modified, then the new copyright notice should be the year of the modification.

Link to the central site copyright page:

<http://www.gov.on.ca/ont/portal/lut/pl.cmd/cs.ce/7_0_A/s/7_0_252/s.7_0_A/7_0_252/l/en?docid=004222>

- 2 **Important Notices:** This page will contain legal disclaimers (e.g. external links) that apply to Government of Ontario websites in general and may also contain notices specific to the website or services provided, if required.

It is strongly recommended this be a link to the centrally maintained page on the Government of Ontario website:

<http://www.gov.on.ca/ont/portal/lut/pl.cmd/cs.ce/7_0_A/s/7_0_252/s.7_0_A/7_0_252/l/en?docid=004231>

- 3 **Internet:** The Internet is a world-wide collection of computer networks that are linked using a set of common communications protocols (TCP/IP, HTTP, SMTP etc.). It is used as a communication medium for all types of data and applications.
- 4 **Intranet:** A network based on Internet protocols belonging to an organization, usually a corporation, accessible only by the organization's employees. An Intranet's Websites look and act just like any other Websites, but a "firewall" surrounding an Intranet prevents unauthorized access.
- 5 **Metadata:** Data that describes data and that enables collaboration and interoperability. Metadata also describes how, when and by whom a particular set of data was collected, and how the data is formatted.
- 6 **Portable Document Format (PDF):** A standard document format (generally Adobe Acrobat portable document format) capable of being viewed with a web browser plug-in. The portable document format enables the document author to specify the layout and presentation of the document, and documents in this format are more difficult to tamper with than regular HTML documents.
- 7 **Privacy:** Link to the centrally maintained page on the Government of Ontario website:
<http://www.gov.on.ca/ont/portal/lut/pl.cmd/cs.ce/7_0_A/s/7_0_252/s.7_0_A/7_0_252/l/en?docid=004228>
- 8 **Privacy Impact Assessment (PIA):** [Privacy Impact Assessment Guidelines](#) provide a methodology for Ministries and program areas to evaluate the privacy implications of new technologies, information systems, program re-designs and/or legislation. The PIA Guidelines also ensure that government initiatives dealing with personal information meet critical privacy requirements, including compliance with FIPPA/MFIPPA and fair information-gathering principles. A privacy impact assessment is required as part of the approval process for I&IT submissions to Management Board of Cabinet where personal information may be affected. Contact your IT Cluster for assistance with PIAs.

- 9 **Splash Page:** A simple page that serves as a gateway to the site, leading to the main home page. A splash page typically resides at the root URL for the site (e.g. www.gov.on.ca). Splash pages are particularly useful in communications and marketing materials.
- 10 **TeleTypewriter (TTY):** A special device (like a text-display phone) that lets people who are deaf, hard of hearing, or speech-impaired use the telephone to communicate, by allowing them to type messages back and forth. A TTY is required at both ends in order to communicate.
- 11 **Web Resource:** An information resource addressable via a Uniform Resource Locator (URL). Web pages, digitized images, sound files, videos or any other information resources made available on Internet, Intranet or Extranet. Websites are examples of web resources.

3. Errata

Created: 2005-11-29

Updated: 2005-12-15

- Minor changes following comments from SADWG and Access and Privacy Office
- Added new item under best practices 3.1.3
- Updated the Acknowledgment section

Updated: 2006-01-13

- Changed Contact information
- Removed highlighting

Updated: 2006-02-06

- Changed Accessibility note (section 1.3) to make explicit the alignment with the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act*.
- Changed introduction (section 0) to reflect that consultation on security issues should be with Corporate Security.

Approved: 2006-02-15

- Revision approved by the IT Standards Council on February 15, 2006. Approved version number set to 2.0 – Standard renamed from *GO-ITS 23.1 - Internet Public Access - Product Design* to *GO-ITS 23.1 Government of Ontario Public Web Standard*

4. Copyright Information

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Appendix A: References

Related Sites

- GO-Web Committee site: <http://intra.goweb.gov.on.ca>
— Standards and Guidelines: <http://intra.goweb.gov.on.ca/st/standards.htm>
- GO-ITS 23.3 - Internet Web Application Interface:
http://www.gov.on.ca/MBS/techstan/GOITS_23_3_Internet_Web_Application_Interface.htm
- Government of Ontario Information & Technology Standards:
<http://www.itstandards.gov.on.ca>
- The World Wide Web Consortium (W3C): <http://www.w3.org/>
- New Media Communications: <http://intra.newmedia.cab.gov.on.ca/>
- I&IT Security Intranet, Security Policy and Procedures: <http://intra.security.gov.on.ca/default.asp>
- Access & Privacy: <http://www.accessandprivacy.gov.on.ca>