AICPA/CPA CANADA

Privacy Maturity Model User Guide

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AICPA/CICA Privacy Maturity Model User Guide

1 INTRODUCTION

Privacy related considerations are significant business requirements that must be addressed by organizations that collect, use, retain and disclose personal information about customers, employees and others about whom they have such information. **Personal information** is information that is about, or can be related to, an identifiable individual, such as name, date of birth, home address, home telephone number or an employee number. Personal information also includes medical information, physical features, behaviour and other traits.

Privacy can be defined as the rights and obligations of individuals and organizations with respect to the collection, use, retention, disclosure, and disposal of personal information.

Becoming privacy compliant is a journey. Legislation and regulations continue to evolve resulting in increasing restrictions and expectations being placed on employers, management and boards of directors. Measuring progress along the journey is often difficult and establishing goals, objectives, timelines and measurable criteria can be challenging. However, establishing appropriate and recognized benchmarks, then monitoring progress against them, can ensure the organization's privacy compliance is properly focused.

2 AICPA/CICA PRIVACY RESOURCES

The American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA) and the Canadian Institute of Chartered Accountants (CICA) have developed tools, processes and guidance based on ***Generally Accepted Privacy Principles* (GAPP)** to assist organizations in strengthening their privacy policies, procedures and practices. GAPP and other tools and guidance such as the AICPA/CICA Privacy Risk Assessment Tool, are available at www.aicpa.org/privacy and www.cica.ca/privacy.

Generally Accepted Privacy Principles (GAPP)

Generally Accepted Privacy Principles has been developed from a business perspective, referencing some but by no means all significant local, national and international privacy regulations. GAPP converts complex privacy requirements into a single privacy objective supported by 10 privacy principles. Each principle is supported by objective, measurable criteria (73 in all) that form the basis for effective management of privacy risk and compliance. Illustrative policy requirements, communications and controls, including their monitoring, are provided as support for the criteria.

GAPP can be used by any organization as part of its privacy program. GAPP has been developed to help management create an effective privacy program that addresses privacy risks and obligations as well as business opportunities. It can also be a useful tool to boards and others charged with governance and the provision of oversight. It includes a definition of privacy and an explanation of why privacy is a business issue and not solely a compliance issue. Also illustrated are how these principles can be applied to outsourcing arrangements and the types of privacy initiatives that can be undertaken for the benefit of organizations, their customers and related persons.

The ten principles that comprise GAPP:

- **Management.** The entity defines, documents, communicates and assigns accountability for its privacy policies and procedures.
- **Notice.** The entity provides notice about its privacy policies and procedures and identifies the purposes for which personal information is collected, used, retained and disclosed.
- **Choice and consent.** The entity describes the choices available to the individual and obtains implicit or explicit consent with respect to the collection, use and disclosure of personal information.
- **Collection.** The entity collects personal information only for the purposes identified in the notice.
- **Use, retention and disposal.** The entity limits the use of personal information to the purposes identified in the notice and for which the individual has provided implicit or explicit consent. The entity retains personal information for only as long as necessary to fulfill the stated purposes or as required by law or regulations and thereafter appropriately disposes of such information.
- **Access.** The entity provides individuals with access to their personal information for review and update.
- **Disclosure to third parties.** The entity discloses personal information to third parties only for the purposes identified in the notice and with the implicit or explicit consent of the individual.

- **Security for privacy.** The entity protects personal information against unauthorized access (both physical and logical).
- **Quality.** The entity maintains accurate, complete and relevant personal information for the purposes identified in the notice.
- **Monitoring and enforcement.** The entity monitors compliance with its privacy policies and procedures and has procedures to address privacy-related complaints and disputes.

Since GAPP forms the basis for the Privacy Maturity Model (PMM), an understanding of GAPP is required. In addition, an understanding of the entity's privacy program and any specific privacy initiatives is also required. The reviewer should also be familiar with the privacy environment in which the entity operates, including legislative, regulatory, industry and other jurisdictional privacy requirements.

Privacy Maturity Model

Maturity models are a recognized means by which organizations can measure their progress against established benchmarks. As such, they recognize that:

- becoming compliant is a journey and progress along the way strengthens the organization, whether or not the organization has achieved all of the requirements;
- in certain cases, such as security-focused maturity models, not every organization, or every security application, needs to be at the maximum for the organization to achieve an acceptable level of security; and
- creation of values or benefits may be possible if they achieve a higher maturity level.

The AICPA/CICA Privacy Maturity Model[1] is based on GAPP and the Capability Maturity Model (CMM) which has been in use for almost 20 years.

The PMM uses five maturity levels as follows:

1. Ad hoc – procedures or processes are generally informal, incomplete, and inconsistently applied.
2. Repeatable – procedures or processes exist; however, they are not fully documented and do not cover all relevant aspects.
3. Defined – procedures and processes are fully documented and implemented, and cover all relevant aspects.
4. Managed – reviews are conducted to assess the effectiveness of the controls in place.
5. Optimized – regular review and feedback are used to ensure continuous improvement towards optimization of the given process.

In developing the PMM, it was recognized that each organization's personal information privacy practices may be at various levels, whether due to legislative requirements, corporate policies or the status of the organization's privacy initiatives. It was also recognized that, based on an organization's approach to risk, not all privacy initiatives would need to reach the highest level on the maturity model.

Each of the 73 GAPP criteria is broken down according to the five maturity levels. This allows entities to obtain a picture of their privacy program or initiatives both in terms of their status and, through successive reviews, their progress.

3 ADVANTAGES OF USING THE PRIVACY MATURITY MODEL

The PMM provides entities with a useful and effective means of assessing their privacy program against a recognized maturity model and has the added advantage of identifying the next steps required to move the privacy program ahead. The PMM can also measure progress against both internal and external benchmarks. Further, it can be used to measure the progress of both specific projects and the entity's overall privacy initiative.

4 USING THE PRIVACY MATURITY MODEL

The PMM can be used to provide:

- the status of privacy initiatives
- a comparison of the organization's privacy program among business or geographical units, or the enterprise as a whole
- a time series analysis for management
- a basis for benchmarking to other comparable entities.

To be effective, users of the PMM must consider the following:

- maturity of the entity's privacy program
- ability to obtain complete and accurate information on the entity's privacy initiatives
- agreement on the Privacy Maturity assessment criteria
- level of understanding of GAPP and the PMM.

1 This model is based on Technical Report, CMU/SEI-93TR-024 ESC-TR-93-177, "Capability Maturity Model SM for Software, Version 1.1," Copyright 1993 Carnegie Mellon University, with special permission from the Software Engineering Institute. Any material of Carnegie Mellon University and/or its Software Engineering Institute contained herein is furnished on an "as-is" basis. Carnegie Mellon University makes no warranties of any kind, either expressed or implied, as to any matter including, but not limited to, warranty of fitness for purpose or merchantability, exclusivity, or results obtained from use of material. Carnegie Mellon University does not make any warranty of any kind with respect to freedom from patent, trademark, or copyright infringement. This model has not been reviewed nor is it endorsed by Carnegie Mellon University or its Software Engineering Institute. Capability Maturity Model, CMM, and CMMI are registered in the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office by Carnegie Mellon University.

Getting Started

While the PMM can be used to set benchmarks for organizations establishing a privacy program, it is designed to be used by organizations that have an existing privacy function and some components of a privacy program. The PMM provides structured means to assist in identifying and documenting current privacy initiatives, determining status and assessing it against the PMM criteria.

Start-up activities could include:

- identifying a project sponsor (Chief Privacy Officer or equivalent)
- appointing a project lead with sufficient privacy knowledge and authority to manage the project and assess the findings
- forming an oversight committee that includes representatives from legal, human resources, risk management, internal audit, information technology and the privacy office
- considering whether the committee requires outside privacy expertise
- assembling a team to obtain and document information and perform the initial assessment of the maturity level
- managing the project by providing status reports and the opportunity to meet and assess overall progress
- providing a means to ensure that identifiable risk and compliance issues are appropriately escalated
- ensuring the project sponsor and senior management are aware of all findings
- identifying the desired maturity level by principle and/or for the entire organization for benchmarking purposes.

Document Findings against GAPP

The maturity of the organization's privacy program can be assessed when findings are:

- documented and evaluated under each of the 73 GAPP criteria
- reviewed with those responsible for their accuracy and completeness
- reflective of the current status of the entity's privacy initiatives and program. Any plans to implement additional privacy activities and initiatives should be captured on a separate document for use in the final report.

As information on the status of the entity's privacy program is documented for each of the 73 privacy criteria, it should be reviewed with the providers of the information and, once confirmed, reviewed with the project committee.

Assessing Maturity Using the PMM

Once information on the status of the entity's privacy program has been determined, the next task is to assess that information against the PMM.

Users of the PMM should review the descriptions of the activities, documents, policies, procedures and other information expected for each level of maturity and compare them to the status of the organization's privacy initiatives.

In addition, users should review the next-higher classification and determine whether the entity could or should strive to reach it.

It should be recognized that an organization may decide for a number of reasons not to be at maturity level 5. In many cases a lower level of maturity will suffice. Each organization needs to determine the maturity level that best meets their needs, according to its circumstances and the relevant legislation.

Once the maturity level for each criterion has been determined, the organization may wish to summarize the findings by calculating an overall maturity score by principle and one for the entire organization. In developing such a score, the organization should consider the following:

- sufficiency of a simple mathematical average; if insufficient, determination of the weightings to be given to the various criteria
- documentation of the rationale for weighting each criterion for use in future benchmarking.

5 PRIVACY MATURITY MODEL REPORTING

The PMM can be used as the basis for reporting on the status of the entity's privacy program and initiatives. It provides a means of reporting status and, if assessed over time, reporting progress made.

In addition, by documenting requirements of the next-higher level on the PMM, entities can determine whether and when they should initiate new privacy projects to raise their maturity level. Further, the PMM can identify situations where the maturity level has fallen and identify opportunities and requirements for remedial action.

Privacy maturity reports can be in narrative form; a more visual form can be developed using graphs and charts to indicate the level of maturity at the principle or criterion level.

The following examples based on internal reports intended for management use graphical representations.

Figure 1 – Privacy Maturity Report by GAPP Principle

Figure 1 shows a sample graph that could be used to illustrate the maturity of the organization's privacy program by each of the 10 principles in GAPP.

The report also indicates the desired maturity level for the enterprise.

Reports like this are useful in providing management with an overview of the entity's privacy program and initiatives.

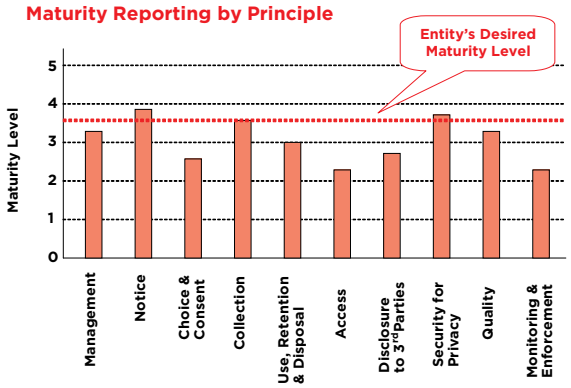


Figure 2 – Maturity Report by Criteria within a Specific GAPP Principle

Figure 2 shows the maturity of each criterion within a specific principle – in this case, the 'Notice' principle.

The report indicates the actual maturity level for each criterion.

The report also indicates the actual and desired maturity level for the principle as a whole.

Reports like this provide useful insight into specific criteria within a privacy principle.

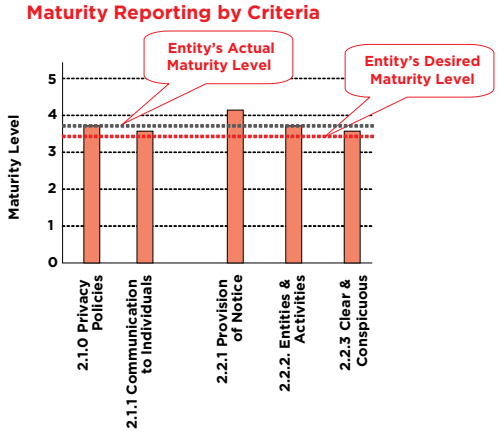
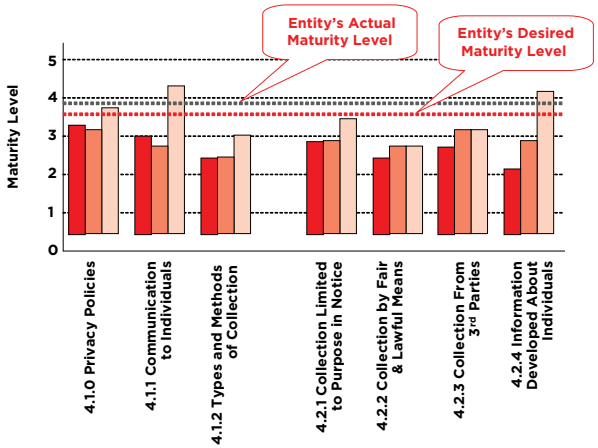


Figure 3 – Maturity Report by Criteria within a GAPP Principle Over Time

Figure 3 shows the maturity of each criterion within the 'Collection' principle for three time periods.

The report indicates the actual maturity level for each criterion for three different time periods.

Reports like this provide useful insight into progress being made by the entity's privacy initiatives over time.



6 SUMMARY

The AICPA/CICA Privacy Maturity Model provides entities with an opportunity to assess their privacy initiatives against criteria that reflect the maturity of their privacy program and their level of compliance with Generally Accepted Privacy Principles.

The PMM can be a useful tool for management, consultants and auditors and should be considered throughout the entity's journey to develop a strong privacy program and benchmark its progress.

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