

# GNWT Open Data Guidelines

How to publish  
GNWT data to the  
Open Data Portal



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# Introduction

The Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) is committed to promoting an open and transparent government. This commitment is being enacted through establishing an Open Government program, under the *Open Government Policy*. One of the pillars of Open Government program is Open Data, which seeks to release government-held datasets to the public in order to:

- Increase the transparency and accountability of the Government of the Northwest Territories
- Help identify opportunities to improve programs and services
- Encourage innovation in the private and research sectors

This guide is intended to provide tools and guidance to GNWT departments and agencies on how to implement an open data program in their organization.

## Scope

This guide was developed under the GNWT *Open Government Policy*, which applies to “all departments, agencies and employees of the Government of the Northwest Territories”.

## Relevant Policies and Legislation

The following policies are relevant to open data implementation:

- Open Government Policy
- Open Data Directive
- IMT Governance Policy

## Terms and Definitions

### Open Data

Government-held data, including but not limited to data sets, facts, figures, or statistics, which is released proactively and made available to the public through a variety of means and in formats that are accessible and user-friendly, with minimal or no restrictions on use or reuse, excluding that which is considered sensitive or subject to privacy, security or legal restrictions. The data should be structured (i.e. in tabular format with defined headers) and machine-readable.

### Open Information

Government-held information, including but not limited to information regarding government programs, activities, publications and spending, which is released proactively and made available to the public through a variety of means and in formats that are accessible and user-friendly, with

minimal or no restrictions on use or reuse, excluding that which is considered sensitive or subject to privacy, security or legal restrictions.

## **Open Data Portal**

An online, searchable catalogue of all GNWT open data resources.

## **Departmental Open Data Inventory**

An inventory of all potential or published open datasets that are owned or managed by a department or agency. The inventory will be updated by departments/agencies as a record of what has been published, what may be published and what cannot be published, and why. Departments will provide their Departmental Open Data Inventory to the Office of the Chief Information Officer upon request in order to update the GNWT Open Data Inventory.

## **GNWT Open Data Inventory**

An inventory of all potential or published open datasets that are owned or managed by the GNWT. The inventory will be comprised of the Departmental Open Data Inventories and will be maintained by the Office of the Chief Information Officer. The inventory contains potentially sensitive information and is not intended for sharing with the public.

## **Open Data Coordinators Committee**

The team responsible for maintaining the guidelines, directives, and standards for Open Data. Led by the Office of the Chief Information Officer, the team includes representatives from all departments and the NWT Housing Corporation.

## **Data submission package**

When submitting a new dataset for publication, there are several items described in this guide that should be included:

- The data file or a link to the existing data file to be published
- A completed Open Data Metadata Form
- A data dictionary file explaining the columns in the dataset, if available

## **Metadata**

Data that describes the open data. For example, datasets that are published to the Open Data Portal will have metadata stating who is publishing the data, what tags are applicable, the date it was published, etc.

## **Machine Readable**

Data that is machine-readable is in a structured format that can be processed by a computer without human intervention. Traditional word processing documents and portable document format (PDF) files are easily read by humans but typically are difficult for machines to interpret. Other formats such as extensible markup language (XML), (JSON), or spreadsheets with header

columns that can be exported as comma separated values (CSV) are machine readable formats.

# Publishing Processes



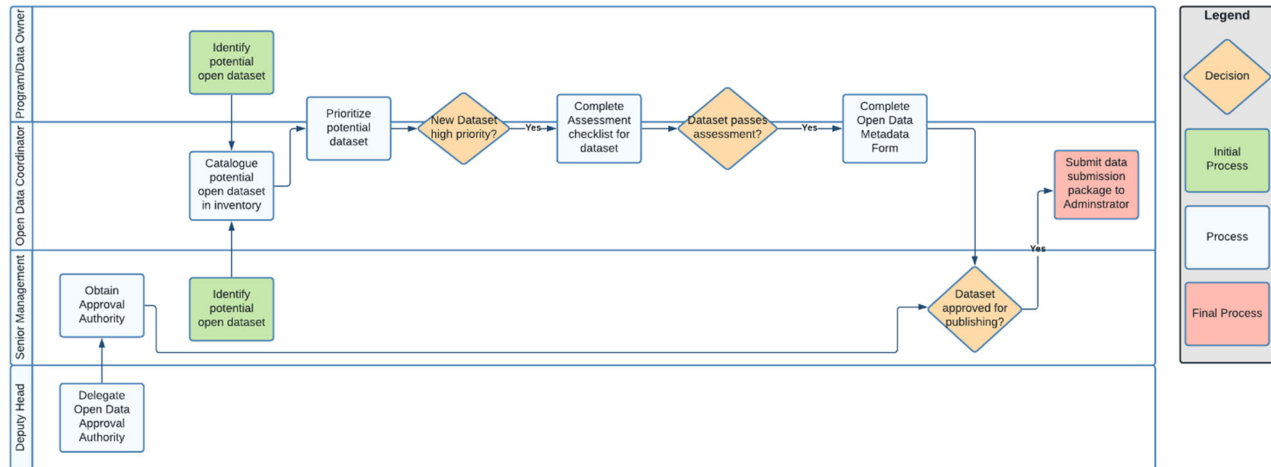
*Overview of open data publishing process*

These guidelines are to assist GNWT departments and agencies with publishing open data to the Open Data Portal.

*If the data was published on a GNWT website before the launch of the Open Data Portal, departments and agencies only need to complete the “Prepare the data” and “Submit data for publishing” steps.*

Open data should be published under the GNWT Open Government Licence whenever possible.

If the dataset cannot be published under the terms defined in the Open Government Licence (see Appendix A), then users should work with their departmental Open Data Coordinator and the Legal Division of the Department of Justice to determine if there is another licence that would be appropriate, or if a new licence needs to be created.



*Detailed view of publishing process with roles*

# 1. Identify potential open data

## Description

The first step in releasing open data is determining *what* can be open data. The *Open Government Policy* defines Open Data as:

Government-held data, including but not limited to data sets, facts, figures, or statistics, which is released proactively and made available to the public through a variety of means and in formats that are accessible and user-friendly, with minimal or no restrictions on use or reuse, excluding that which is considered sensitive or subject to privacy, security or legal restrictions.

The Open Government Licence (see Appendix A) states that open data does **not** include:

- Personal Information
- Information or Records not accessible under the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy (ATIPP) Act of the Northwest Territories
- Data that has third party rights the Information Provider is not authorized to license
- The names, crests, logos, or other official symbols of the Information Provider
- Information subject to other intellectual property rights, including patents, trademarks and official marks

When looking at what **should** be included in open data, we should consider:

- Data that would benefit the private or research sectors
- Data that has significant public interest
- Data that is mandated to be released by legislation or strategy
- Data about program/service utilization & performance
- Data that increases government transparency and accountability, such as financial expenditures
- Data that would be useful for other areas of the government
- Data that belongs in one of the established open data categories (see Appendix B), or departments are mandated to release in the Proactive Disclosure directive

## Steps

1. Identify potential open data according to the above criteria. This is often achieved by reaching out to departmental directors.

2. Once potential open data is identified it should be catalogued in the Open Data Inventory on the Teams channel.

## Tools

- Open Data Inventory
- Open Government Policy
- Open Data Directive
- Open Government Licence
- Open Government Categories

## Responsibilities

The responsibilities related to identifying open data are as follows:

### **Deputy Head**

Accountable for ensuring open data is identified in their department or agency.

### **Departmental Senior Management**

Responsible for ensuring staff are aware of the government's open data program and commitments and recommending or directing which datasets should be identified.

### **Departmental Open Data Coordinator**

Responsible for assisting staff with identifying open data, in accordance with the Open Government Policy, the Open Data Directive and these guidelines.

Responsible for ensuring identified potential open data is catalogued in the Open Data Inventory.

Responsible for communicating about potential open datasets with the GNWT open data community.

Responsible for discussing with the owners of the open data program potential improvements to the inventory.

### **Departmental Program Director**

Responsible for being aware of the government's open data program and identifying data in their work that could be open data to the Departmental Open Data Coordinator.



## 2. Prioritize the data

### Description

Every department and agency in the GNWT has a great deal of data that could be made open. To manage the work related to open data we should prioritize potential open data and focus on publishing the highest value, most accessible datasets.

#### Value of the data

The open data team recommends the following questions be asked when determining the **value** of the data:

- Is there significant interest in the data?
- Would the data be useful to other GNWT departments or agencies?
- Is the release of the data mandated in legislation, policy, or strategy?
- Is the data concerning program or service delivery, and could it be used to promote better outcomes?
- Could the data be useful to the private or research sectors?
- Does the data increase government transparency, accountability, and the flow of information to the public?

#### Accessibility of the data

When estimating the **effort** involved in publishing the data, the open data team recommends the following questions be asked:

- Is the data already accessible and available, or would there be work involved in creating it and/or overcoming privacy, security, and legal restrictions?
- Is the data of high quality? “High quality” means the data has the following attributes:
  - **Currency** – The data is recent and applicable to the present
  - **Accuracy** – The data accurately represents the thing it is representing
  - **Completeness** - The data doesn’t have significant missing portions that would impact its usefulness
  - **Consistency** – The data is consistent throughout (i.e., the values in the columns are in the same format and rows are easily comparable)
  - **Usefulness** – It is straightforward for subject matter experts to articulate how this data can be used by external groups

If the data is not of high quality, there may be extra effort involved in raising the quality of the data before the department or agency is comfortable with releasing it.

- Would business processes need to be refined or re-designed to enable releasing this data? (i.e., there is not currently a process to collect and manage this data internally)
- Do third parties (research partners, Federal counterparts, Indigenous governments, etc) need to be engaged before releasing this information?
- What is the workload involved in the ongoing management of this data to ensure it is of the highest quality possible?

These questions have been embedded in the Open Data Prioritization Tool.

## Steps

1. Enter your datasets into the Open Data Prioritization Tool, answer the questions, and you will be given a score for the datasets.
2. Focus on your highest scoring datasets for release. The number of datasets you release depends on the resources your department or agency can dedicate to open data work.

## Tools

- Open Data Prioritization Tool

## Responsibilities

The responsibilities related to prioritizing open data are as follows:

### **Deputy Head**

Accountable for ensuring open data is properly prioritized in their department or agency.

### **Departmental Senior Management**

Responsible for informing staff about legislative and strategic considerations that could inform the prioritization, deciding which datasets should be prioritized for publication and deciding which datasets move forward to assessment and preparation for posting to the Open Data Portal.

### **Departmental Open Data Coordinator**

Responsible for prioritizing the data.

Responsible for ensuring consistency with how different datasets are prioritized.

Responsible for discussing with the owners of the open data program potential improvements to prioritization.

### **Departmental Program Directors**

Responsible for providing information about the data to assist in prioritization.

## 3. Assess the data

### Description

Not all data can be open, and we have a duty to ensure that the data we are releasing does not compromise:

- An individual’s privacy
- Any laws, contracts or policies regarding releasing the data
- Data sharing agreements the GNWT has entered into with a 3<sup>rd</sup> party
- The security of the GNWT

Data that is classified as “public” is not necessarily “open”. For example, data containing individual names, like a corporate registry, may be “public” but may not be “open”.

To ensure these considerations are made, the open data team has built an assessment checklist to be completed by departmental staff and signed off by the appropriate departmental authority. We have also adopted the Information Security Classification Standard, to assist with assessing the security of the dataset (Appendix C). Data being released should be classified as “public”, per the Standard.

**NOTE:** Some departments and agencies may already have their own assessment process. They can continue to use it, but it must cover the open data criteria above.

### Steps

1. Complete an assessment checklist for each dataset. If the answer to any question is “No”, work with the departmental staff to ensure you should release the dataset.

**NOTE:** If the answer to any question is no, the data can likely not be published under the GNWT Open Government Licence. Another licence will have to be specified for the data. Talk with your Open Data Coordinator to determine what licence is appropriate.

### Tools

- GNWT Open Data Assessment Checklist
- Information Security Classification Standard

### Responsibilities

The responsibilities related to assessing open data are as follows:

#### **Deputy Head**

Accountable for ensuring their organization’s open data is properly assessed for legal, security and privacy.

#### **Departmental Open Data Coordinator**

Responsible for assisting staff with assessing open data and the use of the GNWT Open Data Assessment checklist.

Responsible for consulting with the GNWT Access and Privacy Office (JUS) if clarity is required around privacy concerns, with the Information Security team (FIN) if clarity is required around security concerns, and with the Legal Division (JUS) if clarity is required around legal concerns.

Responsible for discussing with the owners of the open data program potential improvements to assessment.

**Departmental Program Directors**

Responsible for assessing the data.

## 4. Prepare the data

### **Description**

Once the data has been identified, prioritized, and assessed it needs to be prepared to be published. This means completing the metadata required for inclusion in the Open Data Portal and formatting the file to be *accessible* and *machine-readable*.

If the data is going to be linked from else where and not hosted in the Open Data Portal, the format does not need to be changed, but the metadata still needs to be prepared.

### **Metadata**

You will need to populate the metadata for the data. The metadata describes the data and allows it to be catalogued and searched for in the Open Data Portal.

The metadata includes things like:

- A description of the contents of the data
- The date the data was published
- Who is responsible for the data
- Tags related to the content of the data

### **Format**

You may also need to reformat your data so that it is accessible and machine-readable.

### **Accessible**

To make data accessible, it should be release in an “open format”. Open formats are data formats that are in the public domain, so anyone can make use of them and there are free tools available to view and modify their contents. Open formats include:

- Comma Separated Values (CSV)
- Plain Text (TXT)
- Office Open XML formats (OOXML)

- Office Open XML Workbook (XLSX)
- Javascript Object Notation (JSON)
- Extensible Markup Language (XML)
- Open Document Format (ODF)
- Rich Site Summary (RSS)
- Keyhole Markup Language (KML)
- Shapefile (SHP)
- Geography Markup Language (GML)
- XYZ format (XYZ)

If you are not able to save your data in any of these formats it can still be published to the Open Data Portal, but the above formats are preferred.

**Machine-Readable**

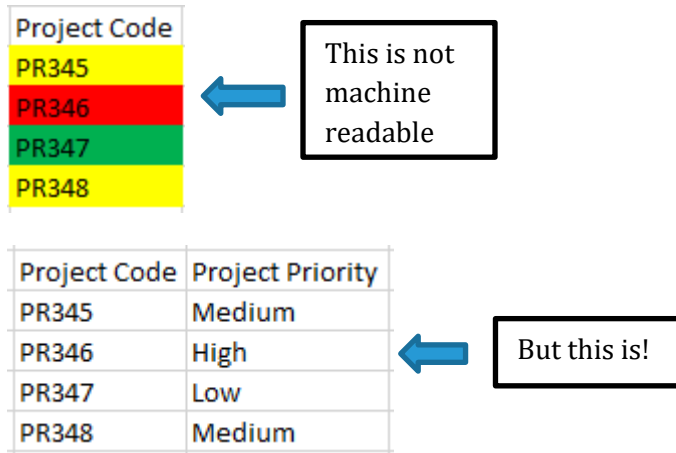
Making data “machine readable” means structuring the data so that it can be easily analyzed, transformed, or imported by a computer program or a database. This makes it easier for users of the data to get more value from it. We tend to create spreadsheets that are “human readable”, but these are typically not machine-readable.

To make data machine readable:

**1. Don’t store information in formatting**

Computer analysis programs will ignore any formatting, like bolding or colour coding, so if you are recording details of your data using formatting that should be removed and included in a new column.

For example:



**2. Avoid long, explanatory headers in data files**

The computer program someone is using to load the data is looking for rows (which represent different records) and columns (which represent fields describing the records) of data.

For example:

All of this should be removed and recorded in metadata

	A	B	C	D	E
1	<b>Project Update for SMC</b>				
2	Prepared by Claire Analyst				
3	Prepared on June 23, 2022				
4	This report is prepared for Department X's Senior Management Committee, to assist with resource alloc				
5					
6	<b>Project Code</b>	<b>Project Priority</b>	<b>Project Title</b>	<b>End Date</b>	<b>Assigned</b>
7	PR345	Medium	Widget supply analysis	2023-03-02	Steve
8	PR346	High	Widget replacement	2023-11-15	Jenny
9	PR346	High	Widget replacement	2023-11-15	Meghan
10	PR346	High	Widget replacement	2023-11-15	Grant
11	PR347	Low	Investigation into alternative widgets	Unknown	Matt
12	PR348	Medium	Local widget sourcing	2022-01-25	Holly

The loading program is looking for the “Project Code” field and will be confused by all of the descriptive information above row 6. Instead, this information should be included in the **metadata**, as described in Appendix D.

In the same vein, the data should not have any merged fields. Every row (record) should have the same number of columns (fields).

### 3. Make your data consistent

The database someone is trying to load into has defined “field data types”, meaning all the data loaded into that field must be the same type. Date fields should only list dates, number fields should only have numbers, and so on.

For example:

6	Project Code	Project Priority	Project Title	End Date	Assigned
7	PR345	Medium	Widget supply analysis	2023-03-02	Steve
8	PR346	High	Widget replacement	2023-11-15	Jenny
9	PR346	High	Widget replacement	2023-11-15	Meghan
10	PR346	High	Widget replacement	2023-11-15	Grant
11	PR347	Low	Investigation into alternative widgets	Unknown	Matt
12	PR348	Medium	Local widget sourcing	2022-01-25	Holly

The “Unknown” value in the End Date field is not a date, so it will cause an error when loading. (You should also be aware that the GNWT has a [standard format for dates](#), and it is **YYYY-MM-DD**, as used in the example above)

### 4. Every row should include any mandatory fields

This may seem self-evident, but sometimes when we create spreadsheets we don't follow this rule.

For example:

Blank fields can cause problems

6	Project Code	Project Priority	Project Title	End Date	Assigned
7	PR345	Medium	Widget supply analysis	2023-03-02	Steve
8	PR346	High	Widget replacement	2023-11-15	Jenny
9					Meghan
10					Grant
11	PR347	Low	Investigation into alternative widgets	Unknown	Matt
12	PR348	Medium	Local widget sourcing	2022-01-25	Holly

Rows 9 and 10 do not contain the project code, priority, title or end date. As a person reading this, we would understand that Meghan and Grant are assigned to project PR346, but a computer won't understand that. Instead, the data should look like this:

6	Project Code	Project Priority	Project Title	End Date	Assigned
7	PR345	Medium	Widget supply analysis	2023-03-02	Steve
8	PR346	High	Widget replacement	2023-11-15	Jenny
9	PR346	High	Widget replacement	2023-11-15	Meghan
10	PR346	High	Widget replacement	2023-11-15	Grant
11	PR347	Low	Investigation into alternative widgets	Unknown	Matt
12	PR348	Medium	Local widget sourcing	2022-01-25	Holly

This is not an exhaustive guide to making data machine-readable but covers the most common issues. If you have further questions or concerns about making data machine-readable, please check out the [Open Datasets 101 training video](#) from the Government of Canada's Open Government group, or reach out to the [IS Shared Services desk](#) ([IS.Servicedesk@gov.nt.ca](mailto:IS.Servicedesk@gov.nt.ca)) and they can direct you to our GNWT data experts.

## Steps

1. Export your file in one of the above formats, if possible. If the data is already published this step can be skipped.
2. Review and modify your data to make it machine-readable.

**NOTE:** The Open Data Coordinator is not the data owner, so should not be modifying the data themselves. This is the responsibility of the data owner/program director.

3. See the Teams channel for the Open Data Metadata Form that needs to be completed and included in the data submission package.
4. If you have a data dictionary explaining the fields in your data file, please include that as well.

## Tools

- Open Data Metadata Form

## Responsibilities

The responsibilities related to preparing open data are as follows:

### **Deputy Head**

Accountable for ensuring staff properly complete the metadata.

### **Departmental Open Data Coordinator**

Responsible for assisting staff with filling in the metadata form and formatting data so that it is machine-readable.

Responsible for discussing with the owners of the open data potential improvements to the metadata.

### **Departmental Program Directors**

Responsible for exporting the data. Responsible for completing the metadata form, in consultation with departmental communications staff. Responsible for modifying the data, if required, to be machine-readable.

## 5. Approve the data

### **Description**

The deputy head is accountable for making sure the data their department or agency is publishing does not pose any privacy, security, or legal risk. A departmental senior manager should review and approve the data submission package once it is complete. The approval should be indicated on the bottom of the assessment checklist.

If the data contains sensitive information or compromises the security of the GNWT, the signing authority will be held accountable. It is up to departments to determine where this authority should sit, however it is recommended that it sit with a senior manager who understands the data.

### **Steps**

1. A person who has been delegated the authority for approving new datasets reviews the Assessment Checklist and signs the bottom

### **Tools**

- Assessment checklist

### **Responsibilities**

#### **Deputy Head**

Accountable for delegating publishing approval authority to the appropriate senior managers.

OR



Approving that the data has been properly prioritized and assessed, and there are no issues with publishing the data to the Open Data Portal.

**Departmental Senior Management**

Responsible for approving that the data has been properly prioritized and assessed, and there are no issues with publishing the data to the Open Data Portal.

**Departmental Open Data Coordinator**

Responsible for assisting staff and management with shepherding the data through the appropriate approval(s).

Responsible for discussing with the owners of the open data program potential improvements to the approval process.

Responsible for identifying potential high-profile datasets to departmental communications.

**Departmental Communications**

Preparing communications plans for high profile datasets.

**Departmental Program Directors**

Responsible for completing the data submission package for review and obtaining approval from appropriate authority by having them sign the Assessment Checklist.

## 6. Submit the data for publishing

### Description

The data should now be ready to be published. Until the open data program is well established, we are asking that staff submit their completed data submission packages to the Chair of the Open Data Coordinators Committee.

The following items should be completed and included in the data submission package:

1. The dataset, in an acceptable format, with any accompanying data dictionary  
OR  
The link to the dataset in the Open Data Metadata form
2. The completed Open Data Metadata Form describing the data

The Open Government Steering Committee has approved departments publishing their own data directly to the Open Data Portal. We will update this section once training has been provided to staff.

### Steps

1. Complete the Data Submission Checklist and create the data submission package that includes:
  - a. The dataset and any accompanying data dictionary  
OR

The link to the dataset in the Open Data Metadata form

- b. The completed Open Data Metadata Form
2. Send the complete data submission package to the Chair of the Open Data Coordinators Committee, clearly indicating this is data to be published in the Open Data Portal. If the package is too large to be sent via e-mail, use the [GNWT Secure File Transfer tool](#).

## Tools

- Open Data Metadata Form

## Responsibilities

### **Deputy Head**

Accountable for ensuring open data from their department or agency is published in the Open Data Portal.

### **Departmental Senior Management**

Responsible for ensuring staff send the data for publishing.

### **Departmental Open Data Coordinator**

Responsible for sending the data submission package to the Chair of the Open Data Coordinators Committee.

Responsible for discussing with the owners of the open data program potential improvements to the publishing process.

### **Departmental Program Directors**

Responsible for sending the completed package to their Departmental Open Data Coordinator.

### **Chair of the Open Data Coordinators Committee**

Work with department or agency staff to publish dataset.

# Management Processes

Once your data has been published to the Open Data Portal, there may still be ongoing data management activities required.

## Updating Data

### Description

As your department collects more data related to a published dataset, you may want to update that dataset with new information. The recommended practice is to update already published datasets, rather than publishing new datasets.

Publishing a new entry in the Open Data Portal may be advisable when the updated dataset cannot be easily merged with previous datasets. Such as when:

- The data fields captured have changed
- The format of the data fields have changed significantly
- The content of the data has changed significantly enough to require re-categorization

You may also need to correct data that has already been published.

### Steps

#### **Adding more data to a dataset**

If you are adding additional data to an already published dataset, the dataset should be again assessed to ensure the new data does not violate any privacy, security, or legal guidelines.

1. Re-assess new data for privacy, security, and legal concerns.
2. Update the metadata.
3. Submit the data and any required accompanying documentation to the Chair of the Open Data Coordinators Committee, clearly indicating what dataset you want to update.

The Open Government Steering Committee has approved departments to publish their own data directly to the Open Data Portal. We will update this section once training has been provided to staff.

#### **Correcting data in a dataset**

If the data has already been published, but there is a correction to some of the data fields, you only need to send the updated dataset to the Chair of the Open Data Coordinators Committee.

1. Submit the data to the Chair of the Open Data Coordinators Committee, clearly indicating what dataset you want to correct.

## Tools

- Assessment Checklist
- Open Data Metadata Form

## Responsibilities

### **Deputy Head**

Accountable for ensuring open data from their department or agency is kept accurate and up to date.

### **Departmental Open Data Coordinator**

Responsible for assisting staff with re-assessing new data and updating the metadata as required.

Responsible for sending the data submission package to the Chair of the Open Data Coordinators Committee.

Responsible for discussing with the owners of the open data program potential improvements to the update process.

### **Departmental Program Directors**

Responsible for updating dataset, re-assessing data for any concerns, and updating metadata.

Responsible for sending the completed package to their Departmental Open Data Coordinator.

### **Chair of Open Data Coordinators Committee**

Work with department or agency staff to publish dataset.

## Removing Data

### **Description**

Removing data from an Open Data Portal is generally considered bad practice. The public often wants to see historical data to establish trends to help them anticipate the future. However, if for some reason you do need to remove the data, you will need approval to do so.

Potential reasons for removing data include but are not limited to:

- Retention schedules
- Error in the data
- Published without appropriate approvals
- Previously unidentified privacy, security, or legal concerns

## Steps

1. Contact your Open Data Coordinator to determine what level of approval is required to remove a dataset or link to an external data source.
2. Obtain written approval from your deputy head or approved delegate for removing the dataset
3. Forward the written approval to the Chair of the Open Data Coordinators Committee

## Tools

- None

## Responsibilities

### **Deputy Head**

Accountable for ensuring open data from their department or agency is only removed when necessary.

### **Departmental Open Data Coordinator**

Responsible for assisting staff with removing datasets from the portal.

Responsible for being aware of their departmental data removal policies.

Responsible for submitting the removal request to the Chair of the Open Data Coordinators Committee.

### **Departmental Program Directors**

Responsible for identifying data that should be removed.

### **Chair of the Open Data Coordinators Committee**

Work with department or agency staff to remove the dataset.

## Requesting additional tags

### Description

As more resources are added to the Open Data Portal we will find that we need additional tags be added to the master list to better categorize our resources and make them easier to find.

### Steps

1. Identify the need for an additional tag
2. Contact Corporate Communications at [CreativeServices@gov.nt.ca](mailto:CreativeServices@gov.nt.ca) with:
  - a. The tag(s) you want added
  - b. The meaning and justification for the tag

3. Corporate Communications will review your request and determine whether the tag is a good addition based on (but not limited to) the following criteria:
  - a. If there is an existing tag with the same meaning
  - b. The tag is consistent with existing tag categorizations
  - c. If the tag will assist portal users with finding resources
4. If the tag is deemed to be a good addition then Corporate Comms will ask the Portal Administrator to add the tag to the drop down list.
5. Corporate Communications will inform you if the tag was accepted or not.

## Tools

- None

## Responsibilities

### **GNWT Staff**

Responsible for recommending the addition of new tags.

### **Corporate Communications**

Responsible for curating the list of tags and ensuring that they are clear and useful to the end users of the portal.

### **Chair of the Open Data Coordinators Committee**

Responsible for updating the tags at the direction of Corporate Communications.

## Requesting a new topic category

### **Description**

The list of topics available in the Open Data Portal are based on the GNWT Service Categories, used on our flagship site ([www.gov.nt.ca](http://www.gov.nt.ca)) to assist users in finding services and programs the government offers.

As such, the list of topic categories requires greater consideration than a tag and needs to work with the greater organization of GNWT websites.

### **Steps**

1. Identify the need for an additional topic
2. Contact Corporate Communications at [CreativeServices@gov.nt.ca](mailto:CreativeServices@gov.nt.ca) with:
  - a. The topic(s) you want added
  - b. The meaning and justification for the topic

- c. Examples of the topic being used in other media to describe similar data
3. Corporate Communications will review your request and determine whether the topic is a good fit with our other GNWT web properties based on if the new topic is:
  - a. Distinct from existing topic categories
  - b. Used in other media (research papers, websites, etc.) to describe the data
  - c. Clear and unambiguous
  - d. Using unbiased terminology
  - e. Consistent with patterns and precedents within existing topics
4. If the topic is a good fit, Corporate Communications will update their master list and submit the new topic to the Portal Administrator
5. Corporate Communications will communicate the new topic category to the GNWT and when it is appropriate to use. They will also advise that existing categorizations may need to be revisited to see if the resources would be better categorized with the new topic.

## **Tools**

- None

## **Responsibilities**

### **GNWT Staff**

Responsible for recommending the addition of new topics.

### **Corporate Communications**

Responsible for reviewing recommendations for new topics, approving recommendations and communicating changes about topics to the greater GNWT.

### **Chair of the Open Data Coordinators Committee**

Responsible for updating the topics at the direction of Corporate Communications.

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## Appendix B – Recommended Open Data Categories

These categories are recommended areas departments and agencies consider when determining what data should be made available in the Open Data Portal.

The categories are based on areas of interest identified in the GNWT’s [“What we Heard Report” on Open Government](#), and areas the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat has recommended all jurisdictions consider when looking at what data to release.

Recommended Category	Description
<b>Public Interest</b>	Datasets that are of particular interest to the public, but don't fit in other categories (i.e., Most Popular Baby Names)
<b>ATIPP Requests</b>	Recent summaries of access to information request responses.
<b>Budget and Expenditures</b>	Department and agency budgets and expenditures; audit data.
<b>Asset Info</b>	Data related to tangible capital assets.
<b>Ministerial Reporting and Expenses</b>	Ministerial Mandate and Framework Letters, as well as links to current year and archives of Minister's Expense Reports.
<b>Contract Disclosures</b>	Link to the disclosure of contracts site for information on contracts valued at \$10,000 or more each month.
<b>Grants and Contributions</b>	Grants and contributions over a certain threshold
<b>Land Sales and Acquisitions</b>	Disclosure of the sale and purchase of land by the GNWT
<b>Science &amp; Research</b>	Data coming from research the GNWT has funded, has been donated to us or participated in
<b>Environmental</b>	Completed environmental assessments

<b>Assessments</b>	
<b>Regulation Consultations</b>	Public Engagements done on regulations
<b>Departmental Information, Statistics and Reports</b>	Information on departmental statistics and reports, including annual reports
<b>Key Performance Indicators</b>	GNWT Program Performance Indicators
<b>Forms and Policies</b>	GNWT forms and policies the public may need to access government programs and services.

# Appendix C – Information Security Classification Standard

Security Classification	Definition	Illustrative Examples
<b>HIGH</b>	<p><b>Information classified as high security is normally intended for access by named individuals or positions only. “Eyes only”.</b></p> <p>Could possibly be expected to cause extremely serious personal or enterprise injury, including one or more of:</p> <p><u>Financial harm</u>, such as:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Extremely significant loss of money (eg &gt; \$10M) or tangible assets</li> <li>Extremely significant penalties or recovery costs incurred (unable to perform operations for an extended time, loss of &gt; \$10M income or in cost overruns)</li> </ol> <p><u>Operational harm</u>, such as:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Severely impaired decision making, resulting in severe loss of program control</li> <li>Program closure or serious sanctions as a result of breach of legislation, contract or regulatory standards</li> <li>Major political impact - complete or extended loss of public trust of or confidence in government.</li> </ol> <p><u>Personal harm</u>, such as:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Loss of life</li> <li>Extreme hazard to public safety</li> <li>Wide-spread social hardship</li> <li>Major economic hardship</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cabinet documents.</li> <li>Extremely confidential information and information that is intended for access by named individuals or positions only.</li> <li>Legal confidential information</li> <li>Territorial budget prior to public release.</li> <li>Crisis communication during emergencies and territorial response plans and logs.</li> <li>Emergency information (e.g., pandemic, natural disasters).</li> <li>Information used for testing food or water supplies that could result in loss of life or severe illness.</li> <li>Proprietary information</li> <li>Similarly sensitive or privileged information from another Jurisdiction or organization.</li> <li>Personal identifiable information with high potential for harm if lost or disclosed.</li> </ul>
<b>MEDIUM</b>	<p><b>Information classified as medium security is normally intended for access by a specific group only - can be shared within the Division, Region, or Department.</b></p> <p>Could possibly be expected to cause very high to moderate personal or enterprise injury, including one or more of:</p> <p><u>Financial harm</u>, such as:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Significant financial loss, penalty, or recovery expense (eg &gt; \$1M)</li> </ol> <p><u>Operational harm</u>, such as:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Significant impact on service levels</li> <li>Serious loss of confidence in a government program</li> <li>Damage to partnerships, relationships and reputation</li> <li>Staff forced to resign</li> </ol> <p><u>Personal harm</u>, such as:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Serious personal hardship or embarrassment</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Personally Identifiable Information with limited potential for harm if lost or disclosed.</li> <li>Information intended for a specific group only.</li> <li>Trade secrets or intellectual property.</li> <li>Business or other third party information.</li> <li>Business Continuity Plan information.</li> <li>Identity information that could be used for criminal purposes (e.g., from Vital Stats, Transportation).</li> <li>Employee personnel files and work history data.</li> <li>Financial management information systems.</li> </ul>
<b>LOW</b> GNWT minimum default level	<p><b>Information classified as Low is available to employees and authorized non-employees, contractors, sub-contractors and agents, other organizations, information exchanges, but not published or posted on the web.</b></p> <p>Could reasonably be expected to cause limited or no injury to individuals or enterprises, including one or more of:</p> <p><u>Financial harm</u>, such as:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Limited financial loss</li> </ol> <p><u>Operational harm</u>, such as:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Limited impact on service levels</li> <li>Reduced staff effectiveness due to loss of morale</li> </ol> <p><u>Personal harm</u>, such as:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Minor embarrassment or inconvenience</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information that is generally available to employees and approved non-employees (e.g., contractors, vendors, service providers, or consultants).</li> <li>Operational procedures related to non-critical activities.</li> <li>Personal information with consent for release.</li> <li>Information published by government available to the public, which requires integrity protection</li> <li>Public accounts after publication. (integrity protection)</li> </ul>
<b>PUBLIC</b>	<p>Information that has been designated by a GNWT department or agency for public distribution. Information that is for public, unrestricted dissemination, publication, web-posting or broadcast. Anyone may publish the information, subject to copyright.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public education materials.</li> <li>External press releases, media/public distribution.</li> <li>Territorial budget after public release.</li> <li>Reports and publications issued for public distribution.</li> </ul>

## Appendix D – Open Data Metadata

Type	Field	Description	Public	Searchable	Sample Data	Mandatory
Administrative Metadata	Metadata Contact Position	<i>The position that is responsible for maintaining the data</i>	No	No	Vital Stats Registrar	Y
	Metadata Contact Email	<i>The maintainer of the data. Should preferably be a shared email address rather than a specific person.</i>	No	No	<a href="mailto:jenetta_day@gov.nt.ca">jenetta_day@gov.nt.ca</a>	Y
Descriptive Metadata	Title	<i>A friendly title for the public to see in the portal</i>	Yes	Yes	Top Baby Names of 2020	Y
	Publisher	<i>The organization (department or agency) responsible for publishing and maintaining the data asset</i>	Yes	Yes	Health and Social Services	Y
	Creator	<i>The specific individual or division responsible for publishing and maintaining the data asset</i>	Yes	Yes	Vital Stats	Y
	Source	<i>Original source of data. The instrument used to gather data</i>	Yes	Yes	Birth registrations	N
	Description	<i>A concise description of the contents of the data</i>	Yes	Yes	The 20 most popular names for babies born in the NWT during the 2020 calendar year	Y
	Local Relevance	<i>The relevance of the data or information to the area it is representing. Used primarily for regional scientific research data.</i>	Yes	Yes	Applies to all of the NWT	N
	Notes	<i>Data quality issues, assumptions, constraints, errors, how to cite, disclaimers, other general notes. Will need to include a disclaimer that these are only the KNOWN issues. Other issues may also exist in the data that we are not aware of.</i>	Yes	No	Some misspelling of names, names not in indigenous characters	N
	Topic	<i>The high level category that this data falls into (ie arts, economics, health, labour, population). Should be based off of existing</i>	Yes	Yes	Population	Y

		<i>GNWT service categories.</i>				
	Tags	<i>Curated set of key words or phrases used to describe the data. They can also be used to further subdivide a topic.</i>	Yes	Yes	<i>baby;birth;vital statistics</i>	Y
	Version	<i>The version number of the dataset, based on how many times it's been released</i>	Yes	Yes	1.0	N
	Starting Time Range	<i>The start time applicable to the dataset</i>	Yes	Yes	2020-01-01	N
	Ending Time Range	<i>The end time applicable to the dataset</i>	Yes	Yes	2020-12-31	N
	Geographic Range	<i>The geographic extents the data represents</i>	Yes	Yes	NWT	N
	Latitude	<i>The latitude that the data applies to</i>				N
	Longitude	<i>The longitude that the data applies to</i>	Yes	Yes		N
	Release Date	<i>The date the data was released for publication by the publisher</i>	Yes	Yes	2020-12-18	Y
	Last Modified Date	<i>The last date the data was updated by the publisher</i>	Yes	Yes	2021-01-06	Y
	Update Frequency	<i>How often this data should be updated</i>	No	No	Never	Y
Structural Metadata	Collection Type	<i>The type of data (ie a report, a data set)</i>	Yes	Yes	Data Set	N
	Format	<i>The format of the file (ie XLSX, CSV, XML, TXT)</i>	Yes	Yes	Excel	Y
	License	<i>The applicable licence for this dataset</i>	Yes	Yes	NWT Open Government Licence	Y
	Language	<i>The languages the information is presented in</i>	Yes	Yes	English	N
	Download URL	<i>The URL to download/access the data</i>	Yes	No	<a href="https://www.gov.nt.ca/opa/pendata/topbabynames2020">https://www.gov.nt.ca/opa/pendata/topbabynames2020</a>	N

## Appendix E – Prioritization Tool

	EFFORT						VALUE						
Dept	Data access and availability	Data quality	Business processes require refinement or re-design	Workload involved in the initial publication	3rd party involvement	Workload involved in ongoing sustainment	Significant public interest	Data useful for internal purposes	Data release is mandated in legislation or strategy	Data promote better outcomes for public services	Data encourages innovation and sustainable economic growth	Data increases government transparency, accountability and the flow of information	PRIORITY SCORE
Weight	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
HSS	Not available at this point	High	Minor refinements required	Low (1 week)	None	Semi-automated with occasional hands-on interaction	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	25
EIA	Easy access and available	High	No refinement required	Low (1 week)	None	Significant hands-on interaction required	Yes	Somewhat	No	No	No	Yes	30

*Sample Prioritization tool*

### NOTES

- Prioritization criteria is based on Government of Canada guidance, the NWT Open Government Policy and feedback from the Open Data Working Group
- All fields have drop down lists
- Priority score is automatically updated once fields are complete
- Tool will be provided as a separate Excel spreadsheet



# Appendix F – Assessment Checklist

## Open Data Assessment

Last Updated: August 8, 2022

Departments and Agencies should complete this assessment to determine if their data can be published to the Open Data Portal.

The completed assessment should be signed by a deputy head or their delegate before the dataset package is sent to be published.

Contact Information	
Department or Agency	
Data Owner/ Program Director	
Data Owner Email	
Data Owner Phone	

Dataset Information	
Title	
Description	
Format (csv, json, pdf, xlsx, etc)	
URL/File name	

OPEN DATA CHECKLIST	Yes/No
<b>Data Source</b>	
Does your department or agency have primary responsibility for the data?	
If not, is the person indicated above going to accept responsibility for coordinating with the entity that does have primary responsibility, on behalf of your department/agency?	
Is the dataset complete? (i.e. is there a subset of the data that is being held back?)	
Is the data in a machine-readable or commonly accessible format? (i.e. one of the formats described in the guidelines)	
<b>Privacy</b>	
Is the data free of personal information that may directly identify an individual?	
<b>Security</b>	
Has the data been labeled as “Public” as per the Information Security Classification?	
<b>Legal</b>	
Is the public release and use of the data permitted under law, contract, or policy?	
Is the data free of copyrights or data sharing agreements that would prevent its release and free use?	

---

Data Owner  
(please print name)

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Signature

---

Date

---

Deputy Minister/ delegate  
(please print name)

---

Signature

---

Date