



CRITERIA FOR DEVELOPING PRINCIPLES FOR DECISION MAKING

See Also:

RCW [43.105.054](#) WaTech Governance

RCW [43.105.205](#) (3) Higher Ed

RCW [43.105.020](#) (22) "State agency"

RCW [43.105.020](#) (6) "Enterprise Architecture"

RCW [43.105.450](#) (3f) Office of cybersecurity

RCW [43.105.230](#) State agency information technology portfolio—Basis for decisions and plans.

EA-01 Enterprise Architecture Program Policy

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1. Agencies must develop and adopt [Enterprise Architecture](#) principles for making business and technology decisions according to this standard.

2. Definitions

- a. Principles are general rules and guidelines, intended to be enduring and seldom amended, that inform and support the way in which an organization sets about fulfilling its mission.
- b. Enterprise Principles provide a basis for decision-making throughout an enterprise and inform how the organization sets about fulfilling its mission.
- c. Architecture Principles are a set of principles that relate to architecture work. They reflect a level of consensus across the enterprise and embody the spirit and thinking of existing enterprise principles. Architecture Principles govern the architecture process, affecting the development, maintenance, and use of Enterprise Architecture.

3. Agencies must involve technology and business partners of the organization in the development of the principles to ensure their relevance, acceptance and adoption.

4. To develop a principle-based approach for decision making, agencies must use the following criteria:

- a. Alignment with Business Goals.
 - i. Purposeful: Each principle should support the organization's mission, vision, and strategic goals, ensuring that all architectural decisions

directly contribute to business objectives. This is often described in a rationale and implications statement.

- ii. Compliance: Principles should align with applicable policies, standards, laws, and regulations.
- b. Clear, concise, and focused.
- i. Understandable: Principles should be clearly articulated and easy to understand by all interested parties, not just IT personnel. This fosters broader acceptance and adherence.
 - ii. Actionable: Principles should be specific enough to guide decision-making without ambiguity.
- c. Comprehensive Coverage.
- i. Inclusive: Principles should address key aspects of the enterprise architecture domains and pillars as described in the [EA-01-02-S EA Domain Standard](#).
 - ii. Consistent: Principles should be designed to complement and support one another, avoiding contradictions or overlaps that could create confusion or inefficiencies.
 - iii. Balanced: Principles should ensure a balance between competing needs such as innovation vs. stability or centralized vs. decentralized control.
- d. Stability and Adaptability.
- i. Sustainability: Principles should be designed to accommodate future changes in technology, business, and physical environments.
 - ii. Scalable: Principles must work effectively at different scales of operation and anticipate growth.
- 5. Agencies must document principles clearly and distribute them widely within the organization.**
- 6. Agencies must provide training and resources to help employees understand and apply agency principles in their work.**
- 7. Agencies must review principles in cadence with the enterprise strategy and updated as necessary to remain relevant to the agency's business.**

REFERENCES

1. [Definition of Terms Used in WaTech Policies and Reports.](#)
2. [EA-01-02-S EA Domain Standard.](#)

CONTACT INFORMATION

- For questions about this policy, please email the [WaTech Policy Mailbox](#).

PROPOSED DEFINITION:

- Enterprise Architecture Principles:

Enterprise Architecture (EA) Principles provide a basis for decision-making throughout an enterprise and inform how the organization sets about fulfilling its mission. EA Principles govern the architecture process, affecting the development, maintenance, and use of architecture.

- Architecture Principles:

A set of principles that relate to architecture work. They reflect a level of consensus across the enterprise and embody the spirit and thinking of existing enterprise principles. Architecture Principles govern the architecture process, affecting the development, maintenance, and use of Enterprise Architecture.

- Enterprise Architecture:

An ongoing activity for translating business vision and strategy into effective enterprise change. It is a continuous activity. Enterprise architecture creates, communicates, and improves the key principles and models that describe the enterprise's future state and enable its evolution. Enterprise Architecture (EA) is the ongoing process of turning business vision and strategy into effective organizational change.