**Background**

**MRM History and Context**

The Municipal Reference Model was developed originally in the 1990’s by Chartwell IRM under contract to the Joint Venture, a partnership of the Municipal Information Systems Association (MISA), Ontario Chapter and the Tri-Committee for the Use of Computers in Public Works. With the dissolution of the Joint Venture, ownership of the MRM intellectual property was vested in MISA Ontario.

The original MRM work was subsequently adopted and adapted, with support from Chartwell, by both the Province of Ontario and the Government of Canada, where it became known as the Public Service Reference Model (PSRM) in Ontario and the Governments of Canada Strategic Reference Model (GSRM) in the Government of Canada. In each case, the model was further refined and enhanced, so that it is no longer clear (other than by referring to the original MRM Red Book), which concepts were part of the original MRM and which were added later.

More recently, the Service Mapping Subcommittee (SMSC) of the Joint Councils has been tasked with reintegrating these diverse strands back into a single Canadian Governments Reference Model (CGRM), although it now seems clear that the efforts may focus more on documenting and sharing information from the respective models, rather than expecting that these will be re-integrated into a single national standard. On this basis, it is expected that, at least in the short term, the Municipal Reference Model will continue to require its own model standards board, reviewing and approving model standards and constructs of interest to municipalities. The MRM Standards Board should, in turn, maintain a link to the SMSC, providing updates on changes approved for the MRM and bringing back to the MRM information on developments in relation to the other models.

**What is the Municipal Reference Model? What should be governed?**

The Municipal Reference Model consists of a number of products (“Products”) that require standards approved by an MRM Standards Board:

* The MRM Meta-Model, comprised of:
  + A number of terms (concepts) with an associated definition for each – e.g. program, service, resource, organizational unit, process;
  + For each concept (e.g. program), a set of related attributes, which must also be defined – e.g. program name, program status, program field, program outcome.
  + Lists of acceptable values for some attributes – e.g. 19 valid service output types – with the understanding that some value lists are governed (requiring approval to extend or change), whereas others are open to member changes and additions.
  + A set of relationships defined between the concepts – e.g. a program administers one or more services.
  + Constructs, which typically illustrate specific concepts and relationships in diagrammatic or tabular form – e.g. Service Integration Accountability Model (SIAM); Program-Service Alignment Model (PSAM).

Standards are needed for the scope and form of the Meta-Model components, the way components are organized in the Meta-Model, and the criteria for adding or changing components. Standards governance is needed to approve proposed additions and changes to Meta-Model components.

* The MRM Reference Model, which consists of a set of valid programs, services and other related information (“content”) compiled from analyzing the operation of many municipalities. The purpose of the Reference Model is to provide a convenient and standard starting point for a municipality to create their own business model. Standards are needed for the scope and form of the content, the way content is organized in the Reference Model, and the criteria for adding or changing content. Standards governance is needed to approve proposed additions and changes to the Reference Model content.
* The implementation of both the Meta-Model and the Reference Model within the business modeling software. The software will impose constraints on how the MRM components can be implemented but provide benefits in terms of flexibility and ease of use. When a software decision requires variance from the standards of the Meta-Model and Reference Model, standards governance is needed to evaluate the associated trade-offs and approve the proposed implementation decisions.
* Best Practice Models, that are models of particular municipal programs, functions, etc. submitted by members, associations, vendors, etc. to illustrate specific activities in a form that can be adopted into a subscribing municipality’s own model. Standards governance is needed to determine classification of those submissions, criteria for admitting them, and the form they must take to ensure accessibility by members.
* Use Cases submitted by members, associations, vendors, etc., that are detailed instructions, scripts, templates, etc. for methods and procedures to use the MRM components to carry out a business task – e.g. to develop a strategic plan. Standards governance is needed to determine classification of those submissions, criteria for admitting them, and the form they must take to ensure accessibility by members.

**MRM Standards Board**

**Goal:**

The Board’s goal is to ensure that MRM Products continue to be useful to and usable by the members of the MRM community.

**Mission:**

The Board’s mission is to recommend, review and approve standards related to the Products at the direction of the MRM Project Steering Committee.

**Mandate**

The Board’s mandate is to provide an expert forum to:

* Review and approve the initial implementation of and subsequent changes or additions to standards for the MRM Products as defined from time to time,
* Provide guidance and processes for initiating and carrying out those actions

Excluded from this mandate is any broader responsibility for the MRMv2 Project or ongoing operation of the MRMv2 Program.

**Accountability**

The MRMv2 Project Steering Committee vests full authority in the MRM Standards Board to make decisions within its mandate as defined above.

The MRM Standards Board is a creation of and is accountable to the MRMv2 Project Steering Committee (or its successor) and requires Steering Committee approval in the following areas:

* Changes to its Mandate or Terms of Reference (this document);
* Additions or changes to its membership;

The MRMv2 Project Steering Committee (or its successor) may, at any time, dissolve or restructure the MRM Standards Board. Otherwise, the MRM Standards Board shall continue in operation for as long as is required.

**Membership**

Membership in the MRM Standards Board will be open to representatives of municipalities and other organizations or individuals that have contributed (financially and/or with in-kind resources) to the development of the MRM.

Eligible municipalities are listed in Appendix 1.

Other organizations that have contributed to the development of the MRM and that are eligible for representation on the MRM Standards Board are listed in Appendix 2.

Both the initial members and any additions or changes to members shall be approved by the MRMv2 Project Steering Committee.

In considering potential representatives, it is expected that participants will be knowledgeable in one or more of the following:

* Municipal programs, services and related concepts;
* The terms and definitions used in the Municipal Reference Model (MRM) and/or related reference models in use in other governments in Canada;
* The business modeling software in which the MRM is being implemented.

It is not expected that all MRMv2 members will be represented on the MRM Standards Board.

Membership shall be for a two-year term, with optional renewal by mutual agreement.

A single organization may have more than one member on the Board but where a vote is required each organization will have only one vote.

Members may identify an alternate who can attend meetings and/or represent their organization in voting. It is the responsibility of the Board member to ensure that their alternate is appropriately briefed to participate constructively in the discussion. Members should notify the Chair, in advance, if an alternative is to participate.

**Board Chair**

The Board Chair shall be selected from among the Board membership, and shall serve for a period of two years, with optional renewal.

The Chair shall take the lead in organizing the work of the Board, including scheduling and chairing meetings, registering working groups, ensuring that minutes are taken and posted, ensuring that board documents are circulated to all members, and ensuring that required decisions are taken in a timely manner. The Chair may seek assistance from other Board members, or support staff, in carrying out any or all of these activities.

In the absence of the Chair, the Chair may designate a member of the Board to act as Chair for the purpose of a coming meeting.

**Board Member Participation**

There are two anticipated levels of Board member participation:

* Regular participation in Board meetings to address matters coming before the Board, such as approving recommendations from a Working Group;
* Active participation as Board Liaison on one or more Working Groups (see Product Development Principles) tasked to develop recommendations for standards, changes and extensions to the MRM products. This role will typically require a commitment to review and provide input on draft documents.

**Decision Making**

The Board will strive to reach decisions by consensus without voting. To do this, consensus-building processes will be used such as: gathering information and viewpoints, discussion, persuasion, combining/synthesizing proposals and/or developing totally new ones. Consent does not necessarily mean that everyone must be completely satisfied with the decision; only that it is acceptable (“good enough”) to proceed.

On a frequency to be decided (e.g. monthly), a new release will be proposed that includes items that have been discussed and are ready to be put forward for approval. In general, items will be approved, where no member of the Board is opposed. Where opposition exists, the item will be sent back to the appropriate Working Group for further consideration.

It is the responsibility of Board members to identify, either at the time or by notification sent in advance to the Chair, if they do not agree to an item proposed for inclusion in the release. Otherwise, their support (non-opposition) will be assumed.

Where an item has come back for approval a second time (or more) and the Chair determines that a deadlock exists, the Chair may call for a vote. Where such opposition exists and a vote is required, approval shall require support from at least two-thirds of those participating in the vote. (Note again that each organization receives only one vote.)

Where voting is required, a form of electronic voting shall be investigating to allow those not participating in a meeting to post their vote within one business day of the meeting.

**Board Meetings and Documentation**

A schedule of Board meetings will be established in advance for a period of three to six months, with the schedule posted on the MISA Ontario Sharepoint site. All active Board and Working Group members shall be notified of Board and Working Group meetings at least one week in advance. However, with the approval of the members, such meetings can be rescheduled with less notification.

Meeting agendas, minutes and items for discussion will be posted on the MRM discussion forum on the MISA Ontario Sharepoint site. Access to the site will be provided for all Board members.

Documents for approval shall be posted on the site at least two full business days in advanced of any scheduled meeting.

The Chair shall ensure that minutes (records of decision) and action items are posted within two business days following any meeting.

Non-Board members may be invited to participate in Board discussions of specific items, with the approval of the Board members, which should be sought in advance – e.g. at the previous meeting. Otherwise, meeting participation is limited to Board members or previously designated alternates.

The Board Chair is accountable for maintaining and providing the official information necessary for the Board to function, including Minutes, Agendas, Records of Decision, Listing of Active Members and other supporting documentation.

Matters discussed at the meetings of the Board or any of its working groups shall generally not be considered confidential. Input may be requested from others outside the meeting on matters being discussed. However, the opinions of individual Board members, as expressed in the meetings, should not be a matter for discussion outside the Board.

**Product Development Principles**

Development of MRM Products is based on a set of principles embraced by the MRM Standards Board that are intended to provide consistency in development activities and assist members in planning their commitments to Product development projects. These principles are not intended as a static or rigid policy. The Board welcomes comments.

**Member contribution**

The power of the Board lies in the intellectual contributions of its members. Voluntary investment of effort and expertise is required at every stage of the Product development process. Business requirements, development priorities and Product solutions (within a consistent architecture) are determined by the members who choose to be active participants in the development process. The pace of development is controlled by members' input of resources. Product development is impossible without the active involvement of members.

This principle ensures that the expertise and priorities of members are incorporated into the Products.

**Business driven requirements**

The Products are only successful when they are implemented by MRM Community members and enable members to achieve benefits. Members express their requirements through active participation in the development process (and other means to be determined).

This principle ensures that Product development is tightly linked to the business needs of members.

**Orderly Development Process**

The MRM Steering Committee sets the overall strategy for Product development to meet the business requirements expressed by members, and approves an overall plan based on available resources. Members provide input to the development process through:

* Discussions at member events, such as conferences and user meetings.
* Discussions with MRM Project Steering Committee or MRM Standards Board members.
* Creation of one-page proposals that can be distributed to other members for comment and involvement.

This principle ensures that Product development is orderly and does not impose excessive change on the members.

**Resources**

The MRM Project does not commit significant membership fees to Product development. The members of the MRM Community who elect to participate in Product development will typically fund the proposed development work.

This principle ensures that Product development is driven toward concepts that are important enough to the members to attract resources.

**Decision Making**

The Board strives to reach decisions by consensus without voting. If consensus cannot be reached, a decision requires a two-thirds majority of Board members.

This principle ensures decisions are not dominated by a particular interest group.

**Access to the Products**

The Board operates with the presumption that some Products must be available to the public, some Products must be available to all members, and access to some Products must be restricted to some members only.

This principle ensures consideration for the means to protect intellectual property without creating unreasonable impediments for individuals and smaller organizations to participate.

**Reporting**

The Board reports regularly on the status of requests and progress on the development plan.

This principle ensures that the members of the community are assured that the resources contributed are being used as intended.

**Development Principles**

These principles apply to the Product development process.

**Working Groups**

Working Groups are a key organization feature of the MRM Project’s goal to further develop Products to meet member needs. The Steering Committee and Board encourages broad and effective member participation in Working Groups.

Working Groups are proposed when a member produces a one-page proposal and circulates it for comment and expressions of interest among the members, who indicate their interest through preliminary offers of resources.

Working Groups are formally initiated when the members of a proposed Working Group typically:

* Publish a Working Group Charter that describes their proposed development work in more detail.
* Recommend access to the proposed Product, i.e. made available to the public, all members and so forth.
* Indicate the amount of staff effort and funding they are prepared to commit to achieve the proposed development work.

Members of a proposed Working Group typically seek an endorsement from the MRM Standards Board before investing significant time and resources. On the advice of the Board, the MRM Steering Committee approves proposed Working Group Charters. Criteria for Working Group approval include:

* Participation by at least three members including a liaison member from the MRM Standards Board. For most Working Groups, the Board prefers that membership include at least two municipalities and one other party that may be a municipality, vendor or other party.
* Described business need expressed by many members.
* Expertise committed to the workgroup by members.
* Degree of interdependence with other Products.
* Realistic project goals and plans.
* Availability of sufficient resources – seconded staff and funding commitments

This principle ensures that Product development is positioned for success.

**Consistent architecture**

All Products must conform to the MRM Architectural Standards and Guidelines (covering the Metamodel, Diagram Constructs, Reference Model, Best Practice Models, Techniques and Methods, Technology & Tools, and other standards as indicated).

This principle ensures ease of understanding of the Products and consistent behaviour of the tools.

**Guidance and coordination**

The MRM Standards Board provides strategic and technical advice to the Steering Committee, members and workgroups. It is established by the Steering Committee and is accountable through the Chair. Members of the committee are chosen for their acknowledged expertise in the Product domain. The Board monitors the process of Product development and defines the MRM's technical methodology and standards.

This principle ensures guidance of Product development is approached with sufficient expertise.

**Change management**

All proposed changes to the Products are assessed to ensure that the value the change offers exceeds the cost of implementing it. Any workgroup proposing to rework a particular Product is expected to address this trade-off between enhancement and stability.

This principle ensures the cost of change is adequately recognized.

**Timing of development**

The Products can only be developed with substantial input from the members as well as confirmed through adequate testing. Therefore, the pace of Product development cannot be pre-determined by the Board.

This principle ensures the pace of development is roughly aligned with the pace at which members can absorb new versions of the Products.

**Role of MRM Project staff**

The staff and contractors engaged by the MRM Project facilitate the workgroups that are endorsed by the Board and approved by the Steering Committee, and support ongoing operations and activities of the Board. MRM Project staff assess workgroup submissions for conformity to Product architecture and compatibility with other Products, implement the Product as required, test the Product for compliance and integrity, process change requests, and provide technical support.

This principle ensures that Product development achieves reasonable quality and consistency.

**Version approval process**

Every new Product version is subject to approval by the membership. The Steering Committee determines when and how new versions will be released to the members for testing and approval based on guidance from the Board. Criteria for Product version approval include:

* Product version conformity to the Architectural Standards and Guidelines.
* Evidence of participation of multiple members in the design and production of the Product version.
* Evidence of sufficient testing to ensure sufficient Product version quality.
* Evidence that the Product version will produce value to multiple members.

This principle ensures that membership oversight over Product development is maintained, and single member or narrow interest group domination of the Product development process is minimized.

**Appendix 1: Eligible Municipalities**

Eligible municipalities are listed in Appendix 1.

The following municipalities have contributed funding and/or in-kind resources to the MRMv2 Project and are eligible to nominate representatives to the MRM Standards Board

* Edmonton (City)
* Fredericton (City)
* Halton (Region)
* London (City)
* Markham (Town)
* Mississauga (City)
* Niagara (Region)
* Peel (Region)
* Richmond Hill (Town)
* Saskatoon (City)
* Timmins (City)
* Toronto (City)
* Waterloo (City)
* York (Region)

**Appendix 2: Other Eligible Organizations or Individuals**

The following non-municipal organizations or individuals have contributed funding and/or in-kind resources to the MRMv2 Project and are also eligible to nominate representatives to the MRM Standards Board:

Organizations

* Government of Canada (Treasury Board Secretariat)
* KPMG
* IBM
* Joint Councils
* Province of Ontario (Service Ontario)

Individuals

* John Johnston
* Skip Lumley