Principle 12: The governing body should govern technology and information in a way that supports the organisation setting and achieving its strategic objectives.

The advancement of technology has revolutionised the efficiency of business in modern society. The greater availability and accessibility to information has meant that businesses can achieve higher levels of productivity than previously possible. Technology capable of achieving this has become integral to a business’s operations. Conversely, however, the need for sophisticated system protection has also increased. Businesses have to adapt constantly in order to manage and respond to emerging risks in the protection of information.
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As a response to this, the King IV Code™ (the Code) aims to address technology and information governance as one of its principles for corporate governance in South Africa. It provides various objectives to assist a business with managing this area.

It includes in the ambit of ‘information’ all data, records and knowledge in electronic or any other format which forms part of the intellectual capital used, transformed or produced by the organisation. Technology then refers to all infrastructure, devices, systems and software which either generates, carries or uses information and enables transactions.

As a means of addressing the extensive nature of technology and information management, the Code will require that organisations consistently monitor this area. It will be an ongoing responsibility for an organisation to ensure that it:

- Integrates technology and information with people and processes throughout the organisation;
- Integrates the risks involved in information and technology management in the organisation wide risk management;
- Monitors intelligence in a manner which can proactively respond to issues;
- Manages the performance and the risks of any third party and outsourced service providers;
- Assesses the value provided to the organisation from investments into technology and information management;
- Disposes of obsolete technology and any information in a responsible manner in line with environmental concerns;
- Conducts periodic assessments to monitor the effectiveness of the technology and information systems, including outsourced services; and
- Maintains an ethical and responsible use of technology and information and compliance with relevant laws.
In dealing with privacy matters and technology, the Code recommends that organisations, when dealing with information, have to protect confidentiality, integrity and availability of information, personal information and the security of information. Further adherence to the Protection of Personal Information Act ("POPI") will be critical to this and organisations must consider the following:

- Protection must be extended internally to information pertaining to employees of an organisation in addition to any protection offered externally to customers or other individuals outside the organisation.

- In the event that the organisation outsources its services, it must maintain oversight of the manner in which the third party processes the information as the organisation will still be liable for any failure on the part of a third party to comply with POPI.

- Information must be appropriately classified in terms of POPI, there must be an effective manner of protecting the various types of classified information and there needs to be a plan ensuring that handling of the information is controlled and monitored.

In a separate, but related manner, organisations will also need to manage technology effectively to ensure that strategic and operational objectives are achieved. It will need to monitor developments in technology closely in order to identify any potential opportunities or disruptive effects on the organisation and its business model. Organisations will also have to disclose the arrangements it intends implementing in managing technology and information.