



# GDAC Presents: Business Glossaries

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Hello there,

Thanks everyone who attended today's GDAC Presents meeting

Attached to this email is the Slide Deck presented on the day. We've also pulled together the Q&A for the event highlighting some of the main questions asked.

If you have any other questions or want to get more information contact [data.architecture@ons.gov.uk](mailto:data.architecture@ons.gov.uk) and we'll do what we can.

## Questions and Answers

Q	How does this fit in with the work going on in the Cross Gov Data Leaders group - I understand they are also working on producing a Business Glossary?
A	It would be good to explore the work they are doing and how we can both work together more closely. Can you please connect us up with that group?
Q	Is there an easy way to capture acronyms? The public sector is often very guilty for short handing everything - so would this get confusing?
A	There are several tools out there that can capture acronym data well and we are looking at them to help us! Acronyms are part of our recommended set of business glossary term attributes.
Q	The Geo6 has also produced a geospatial data glossary - how does it compare?
A	It would be good to look at what the team has developed and look for crossovers. If anyone can connect us up to that group, it would be appreciated.



<b>Q</b>	If you have taken definitions from elsewhere are you declaring the source of that definition?
<b>A</b>	One of the key parts of this system would be to have named people (or roles/positions) attached to the terms that go in, crediting them for the source information. We have listed our main sources of information for our definitions in our slide pack and we'll include a full list in our upcoming blog.
<b>Q</b>	What about classifications of the terms with regards to security and retention etc.
<b>A</b>	<p>It's an interesting point. It would make sense to include these for business concepts where there are related physical data assets (it's possible that some would not).</p> <p>We would expect the GDAC Business Glossary to include terms relating to Data Governance (which includes retention, data privacy, access restrictions), and some terms related to Security (although probably not comprehensive coverage of security terms).</p>
<b>Q</b>	Lineage is included in the BG slide. It might be worth qualifying that since Lineage is another confusing term, especially with the term Provenance.
<b>A</b>	<p>Excellent point, it would be remiss of us to mess up terminology! We should probably also define other terms we're using for our main definitions. E.g. "Term Steward" and working with the Data Governance GDAC group to do that.</p> <p>When defining terms, we need to indicate the preferred name for the term and any alternative names. As a GDAC group, we would welcome feedback on preferred terms, e.g. should we use data steward or data custodian?</p>
<b>Q</b>	Will creating new definitions confuse users?
<b>A</b>	<p>Possibly, but what else can we do? We found no obvious, universally accepted, set of terms that we could turn to. The more we can start getting this defined list together, to create a common understanding for GDAC, the better it will be in the long run.</p> <p>We will need to retain a history for terms as well (versioning the definitions) for users to reference. Some terms could be deprecated or changed over time, and it would be useful for users to see which terms were used in the past as well.</p>
<b>Q</b>	Has there been any thinking about how the BG relates to, or is informed by an Enterprise Metadata Model. We are grappling with this relationship here at DWP.
<b>A</b>	<p>Not yet, but as before we would love to have more of a conversation around it so please reach out to us!</p> <p>Terms associated with the Metadata Model need to be included in the Business Glossary. There could be disagreements on terms such as "dataset", and the glossary would be invaluable for clarifying the terms so that they could become common currency amongst data architects across government.</p>



<b>Q</b>	Seeing examples of the Data Dictionary vs BG would be really useful. I have done some work around this so happy to share. It does help stakeholders understand. (edited)
<b>A</b>	Please get in touch ( <a href="mailto:mark.matten@nao.org.uk">mark.matten@nao.org.uk</a> ) to discuss further! We'd love to see it.
<b>Q</b>	We have a Data Glossary of Abbreviations and Terms, and more detailed Data Catalogues per data domain, plus Information Concepts just to confuse everyone :)
<b>A</b>	Again, love to hear from you ( <a href="mailto:mark.matten@nao.org.uk">mark.matten@nao.org.uk</a> ) to discuss further!
<b>Q</b>	What about schema.org?
<b>A</b>	This is a question for the GDAC sub-group that is looking at Metadata. The Data Standards Authority is also looking at metadata standards and schema.org is within scope. The Business Glossary needs to include terms related to metadata and metadata schemas. So we would expect to include term definitions for schema.org, Dublin Core, DACT, StatDCAT etc.
<b>Q</b>	Oh, so this is only with regards to DA and not specific government departments?
<b>A</b>	At first this is for GDAC and Data Architecture teams in Government to come to a common consensus. We envisage spreading out further as we develop.  Ideally, we would have a top-level Business Glossary that covers data Architecture terms across government and also terms related to data standards. Each department would probably want to maintain one (or more?) of its own Business Glossaries, which would be more specialist glossaries e.g. for the health domain, or the tax domain. Ideally, we would find a way to link the glossaries together and cross-refer to terms mastered in other glossaries. We would want to avoid duplication, where possible.
<b>Q</b>	Again, examples of these terms would be really useful. i.e Taxonomy could describe how terms within the BG may align to a specific business domain.
<b>A</b>	We did actually have examples of how we'd populated the glossary term attributes but they didn't make it into the Show and Tell version of our slide pack. We'll try to show these off in the upcoming blog!
<b>Q</b>	Would adding examples to some terms (types of taxonomy) add clarity?
<b>A</b>	Yes. Good idea. This is all very conceptual stuff and more concrete examples will surely help. Again, another thing to consider for the follow-up blog post.



Q	We have a flat taxonomy at The National Archives used to categorise our records using easy subject categories rather than archival or government terminology
A	Please get in touch ( <a href="mailto:mark.matten@nao.org.uk">mark.matten@nao.org.uk</a> ) to discuss further
Q	How did you choose the terms defined in your glossary?
A	“Business Glossary” was given to our working group by GDAC. We were aware of some other terms ourselves that “seemed”, “sounded” or “felt” similar (we’ve seen then used in similar contexts) and so we went after defining these.
Q	Who is the audience for the glossary? Also the definition are very long - will that be effective in communicating the definition?
A	<p>In terms of the audience for these definitions: GDAC is the initial audience to help bring us a common vocabulary and understanding of words and terminology. Perhaps we need to break these down into “core” and “supporting” clauses or have high/medium/low level definitions. Of course, these definitions are only a “decent” (hopefully!) starting point and we still need to govern and evolve these. We welcome comments on the definitions as they stand, and we’ll retain governance of the terms for the time being.</p> <p>In terms of talking to the audience though, we will work with Matt Davies and the Stakeholder Team in the ONS to help make sure we have clear communication on what we work on.</p>
Q	Geospatial Commission has a long running project "Data Discoverability", which would be worth looking into glossaries for geospatial datasets
A	That does sound good, if anyone has any more details please contact Mark directly ( <a href="mailto:mark.matten@nao.org.uk">mark.matten@nao.org.uk</a> )
Q	What do you think about having an enterprise model populate an initial BG, with Entities and Items, and then have Terms derived from those items via rules?
A	<p>This seems like a logical place to start. If you have worked on something similar, we’d be really interested to discuss it (<a href="mailto:mark.matten@nao.org.uk">mark.matten@nao.org.uk</a>). Certainly, it would make sense to use existing concepts and their definitions to populate a business glossary and then decide should the glossary lead the model or vice versa.</p> <p>One issue we would need to address when importing terms from enterprise models is that we would need to assign ownership of the terms at that time. The term owner would then decide whether the definitions would need to change (especially when importing terms from multiple enterprise models). There might be a knock-on impact on the enterprise models which supplied the terms. The assumption is that once the terms were imported</p>



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onto the business glossary, the terms would be mastered there, and enterprise models would need to align with the glossary.

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**Q** How are you defining associative categories?

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**A** Good spot. It another term we're using to define other terms so that really needs to go into our set of terms. We'll add this to our work backlog.

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**Q** So isn't a Flat Taxonomy similar to a classification?

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**A** Yes, please see our definition of *Taxonomy*.

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**Q** Does the comment "data catalogues should be in isolation" and should probably be with data dictionary - does that depend on the content?

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**A** I'm not sure I understand the question. Could you please get in touch ([mark.matten@nao.org.uk](mailto:mark.matten@nao.org.uk)) so we can answer this for you?

