



For the Attention of Government agencies and Regulators

Disappearing digital records threaten transparency and compliance in Government

Government agencies and regulators are called to invest in the preservation of digital materials to maintain regulatory compliance, legal retention and public accountability.

When access to records of decisions, policies and inquiries is not sustained through effective preservation, transparency is put at risk and the accountability of governments and public officials accountable compromised. Evidence of their actions and decisions becomes inaccessible or inadmissible, undermining public scrutiny, fairness and the protection of legitimate rights.

Furthermore, when public records are unavailable, our picture of events becomes incomplete and public perception can be manipulated, altering opinions and debates, shaping narratives and reducing confidence. Trust in institutions declines, making it harder for the public to hold governments and corporations accountable, and makes proving any wrongdoing or enforcing laws nearly impossible. And transgressions have the potential to continue unchecked as a result.

A new version of the [Global 'Bit List' of Endangered Digital Materials](#), published today by the [Digital Preservation Coalition](#), confirms that [Non-standard public records](#) are Practically Extinct, with others such as [Records of Quasi-Governmental Agencies](#) and [Politically Sensitive Data](#) listed as Critically Endangered, underscoring the urgency of digital preservation efforts to counter this digital obfuscation.

Describing digital preservation as a proven way to ensure continued access to digital materials for as long as necessary, William Kilbride, Executive Director for the Digital Preservation Coalition concludes that data loss is not inevitable, if the right decisions and actions are taken at the right time:

“Digital preservation is an important protection of what we observe too frequently around the world at the moment. Our members around the world are working hard to implement and sustain robust digital preservation practices to safeguard our digital heritage and in that way secure confidence and resilience of governments and their agencies. And if the *Bit List* makes one thing clear, it is that digital preservation is not a hypothetical anxiety for the few. It is an imperative for us all.”

The DPC’s *Global 'Bit List' of Endangered Digital Materials*—or the *Bit List*—is a powerful call to action from the global digital preservation community. It highlights the digital content most at risk of being lost, based on real-world conditions and expert insight. By clearly identifying both the urgency of the threat and the value of the content, the *Bit List* shines a spotlight on the digital materials that demand immediate attention to ensure their survival.

The Bit List entries relevant to maintaining transparency and compliance in Government are:

Practically Extinct

- [Non-standard public records](#)

Critically Endangered

- [Records of quasi-governmental agencies](#)
- [Records of local government](#)



- [Digital archives from public enquiries and commissions](#)
- [Politically sensitive data](#)
- [Evidence in court](#)

Endangered

- [Contractual documents and related records](#)
- [Corporate records of long duration](#)
- [Proceedings in court](#)

Vulnerable

- [Pension, mortgage, and insurance records](#)