1.0 Introduction

Presently most of the e-Governance applications are operating in silos. For a successful e-Governance system there is a need for seamless sharing and exchange of data among departmental applications. Semantic interoperability among e-Governance applications requires that precise meaning of exchanged information is understood across applications. There is a need for commonly accepted data definitions for the various elements used in Governance systems. Hence, standardization of data elements is the prerequisite for systematic development of e-Governance applications.

Data Standards may be defined as the agreed upon terms for defining and sharing data. Data Standards promote the consistent recording of information and are fundamental to the efficient exchange of information. They provide the rules for structuring information, so that the data entered into a system can be reliably read, sorted, indexed, retrieved, communicated between systems, and shared. They help protect the long-term value of data.

Once the data standards are in place, there is a need to manage data, information, and knowledge. Metadata of standardized data elements can be used for this purpose.

Metadata is structured information that describes, explains, locates or otherwise makes it easier to retrieve, use or manage an information resource. Metadata is often called data about data or information about information. A metadata is a matter of context or perspective -what is metadata to one person or application can be data to another person or application.

In other words, Metadata facilitates the user by providing access to the raw data through which the user can have an understanding of the actual data. Hence, Metadata is an abstraction layer that masks the underlying technologies, making the data access friendlier to the user.

The initial report prepared by Working group on Data and Metadata Standards for Application Domains, under the Chairmanship of Prof. C.R. Muthukrishnan, IIT-M, Chennai was used as a base document by the Expert Committee on Data and Metadata Standards.

1.1 Scope

The data elements can be categorized in two categories - Generic data elements and Custom data elements. The Generic data elements are usually defined as commonly used data elements in e-Governance applications across different domains. Custom data elements are derived from generic data elements, specific to the requirements of an application within a domain. In the present version of the Data and Metadata Standards (MDDS), **generic data elements common across all domain applications, generic data elements for Person Identification and generic data elements for Land Region Codification** have been identified and standardized.

In this document, the nomenclature of Generic data elements and their business formats have been specified. Also, the Metadata for each of these elements has been specified.

Further, the values of certain generic data elements need to be controlled and defined in advance, for using them uniformly across the domain applications. The values of such generic data elements are specified in their respective **Code directories.** In this document, the code directories relevant to the generic data elements for Person Identification and