



Australian Government



Digital Capability Assessment Process (DCAP)

A guide for agencies

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Australian Government Digital and ICT Investments – DTA Oversight

The Digital Transformation Agency (DTA) provides strategic advice, policy leadership and assurance to the Australian Government (the Government) on its digital and ICT investments to help drive the digital transformation of public services.

The DTA is responsible for managing strategic coordination and oversight functions for digital and ICT investments across the initiative life cycle.

The DTA delivers this by:

- Providing advice to agencies developing business cases, new policy proposals, and Cabinet submissions, to ensure they align and comply with whole-of-government digital and ICT policies, priorities, and standards.
- Providing advice to the Government when deciding on new digital and ICT investment policy proposals.
- Ensuring agencies plan for assurance by developing agreed plans which are then overseen during delivery.
- Collecting regular project performance reports from agencies and providing advice to the Government on the overall health of its digital and ICT investment portfolio.

The Digital Capability Assessment Process (DCAP)

The Digital Capability Assessment Process (DCAP) is a set of whole-of-government digital and ICT policies and standards that all new digital and ICT investment proposals will need to demonstrate a level of alignment and compliance with, prior to consideration by Government.

This guide has been developed to assist agencies in understanding the context and purpose of the DCAP, and to guide agencies when using the DCAP Assessment Tool by providing further information on each digital and ICT policy and standard.

This Guide is not suitable for the Prioritisation State (see the note below).

Note (Prioritisation state): This guide is not suitable to be applied during the Prioritisation state, as some proposals identified for Prioritisation might not have authority to come forward to the Expenditure Review Committee. While it is important for agencies to be thinking about issues like reuse, cyber, assurance and benefits requirements at this stage, it is premature for agencies to undertake the DCAP as part of the Prioritisation process.

Whole-of-Government Digital and ICT Investment Oversight Framework

The Australian Government has a [Whole-of-Government Digital and ICT Investment Oversight Framework](#) (Investment Oversight Framework) to manage its digital and ICT investments. Overseen by the DTA, the Investment Oversight Framework is a six-state, end-to-end framework providing a mechanism for the Government to manage digital investments across the entire initiative lifecycle.

The Investment Oversight Framework was endorsed by Government as part of the 2021-22 Mid-Year Economic Fiscal Outlook (MYEFO). Agencies are required to work with the DTA to ensure all digital and ICT investments are planned, developed, and implemented in accordance with Government requirements, and the Investment Oversight Framework.

Six State Process

- 1. Strategic Planning** defines the Government's digital and ICT investment portfolio, its future objectives and identifies capability gaps.
- 2. Prioritisation** prioritises, plans, and advises on investments to deliver on the Government's digital and ICT objectives.
- 3. Contestability** assesses compliance with whole-of-government digital and ICT policies as part of ensuring proposals brought forward for government consideration are robust.
- 4. Assurance** ensures that all in-scope investments proactively design and implement fit-for-purpose and proportionate assurance arrangements to support successful delivery.
- 5. Sourcing** ensures Government obtains the best value for money from digital and ICT investments.
- 6. Operations** provides regular analysis of the Government's digital investments and augment this with other datasets to create rich insights.

Investments subject to the Investment Oversight Framework

The Investment Oversight Framework applies in principle to all Government digital and ICT investments which are defined as:

- Investments that use technology as the primary lever for achieving expected outcomes and benefits. This includes investments that are:
 - transforming the way people and businesses interact with the Australian Government and;
 - improving the efficiency and effectiveness of Australian Government operations, including through automation.

The Investment Oversight Framework applies where the digital and ICT investment:

- is brought forward by a non-corporate Commonwealth entity and, where specifically requested by the Minister responsible for the Digital Transformation Agency, a Corporate Commonwealth entity; and
- involves ICT costs¹; and
- is being brought forward for government consideration as a new policy proposal.²

¹ All new policy proposals (post July 2021) with ICT costs are subject to the Contestability (State 3) and Assurance (State 4) stages of the Investment Oversight Framework.

For clarity, different thresholds and eligibility criteria apply for the [ICT Investment Approval Process](#) and the annual Prioritisation process (State 2). Additional information is available on request from the DTA.

² The DTA and the Department of Defence are applying the Investment Oversight Framework in a way that avoids duplicating Defence's established, comparable, and effective strategic planning and decision-making process under the Defence Integrated Investment Program (IIP) or the application of standards and policies compromising warfighting or coalition requirements.

Budget Process Operational Rules

All policy proposals must have authority from the Cabinet or the Prime Minister³ and must comply with the Department of Finance's Budget Process Operational Rules (BPORs) to come forward for consideration. The BPORs include the DTA's digital and ICT oversight function in the Budget and MYEFO process. The below information summarises the DTA's contestability requirements under the BPORs.

For all digital and ICT investment proposals, agencies must consult the DTA early to:

- ensure that the digital elements of their proposal align and comply with relevant digital and ICT policies; and
- determine if the policy proposal is subject to the ICT Investment Approval Process (IIAP).

Agencies must receive correspondence from the DTA that they have provided sufficient information to the DTA before their proposal is considered by Government.

Agencies are also required to provide any requested information on any ICT project to the DTA to support its role in overseeing projects throughout the initiative life cycle.

More information on the BPORs can be found on the Department of Finance website:

finance.gov.au/government/federal-budget/budget-process

ICT Investment Approval Process

The ICT Investment Approval Process (IIAP) aims to assist entities to develop robust business cases and support the effective implementation of digital and ICT proposals. Proposals subject to the IIAP go through a staged approval process (formerly known as the 'two pass' Cabinet approval process).

At each stage of approval, agencies must develop a business case to ensure that the Cabinet and its relevant committees have sufficient information about the proposal to make an informed investment decision.

The DCAP is a complementary exercise to the IIAP. If your proposal is subject to the IIAP, your work in developing the business case requirements can be used as reference points to substantiate your responses in the DCAP Assessment Tool.

More information on the IIAP can be found on the DTA's website:

dta.gov.au/help-and-advice/digital-and-ict-investments/ict-investment-approval-process

Digital and ICT Workforce Considerations

The APS is experiencing shortages in digital and ICT roles. Demand for digital and ICT job family roles is expected to have strong to very strong growth in the APS as well as within the broader economy over the next 5 years.

When planning your digital and ICT investment proposal you should consider the workforce capacity and capability to achieve the outcomes of your investment. Consideration should be given to the skills required and their availability in the market and how this might impact project timelines, deliverables and on-going workforce needs post-project.

For more information on how to plan for your workforce visit the APSC's website:

[Workforce Planning Resources](#)

The APS is committed to reducing the reliance on consultants and contractors and boosting the Australian Public Service's capabilities. The APS Strategic Commissioning Framework, published by the Australian Public Service Commission, requires core government work to be done by APS employees and restricts outsourcing to defined circumstances. From 2024, agency heads will need to set agency-specific targets which will be publicly reported in corporate plans.

For more information visit the APSC's website:

[APS Strategic Commissioning Framework](#)

³ A delegate acting on behalf of the Prime Minister may provide or alter authority to bring forward policy proposals.

The Digital Capability Assessment Process

The DCAP is a set of whole-of-government digital and ICT policies and standards that all new digital and ICT investment proposals will need to demonstrate a level of alignment and compliance with, prior to consideration by Government.

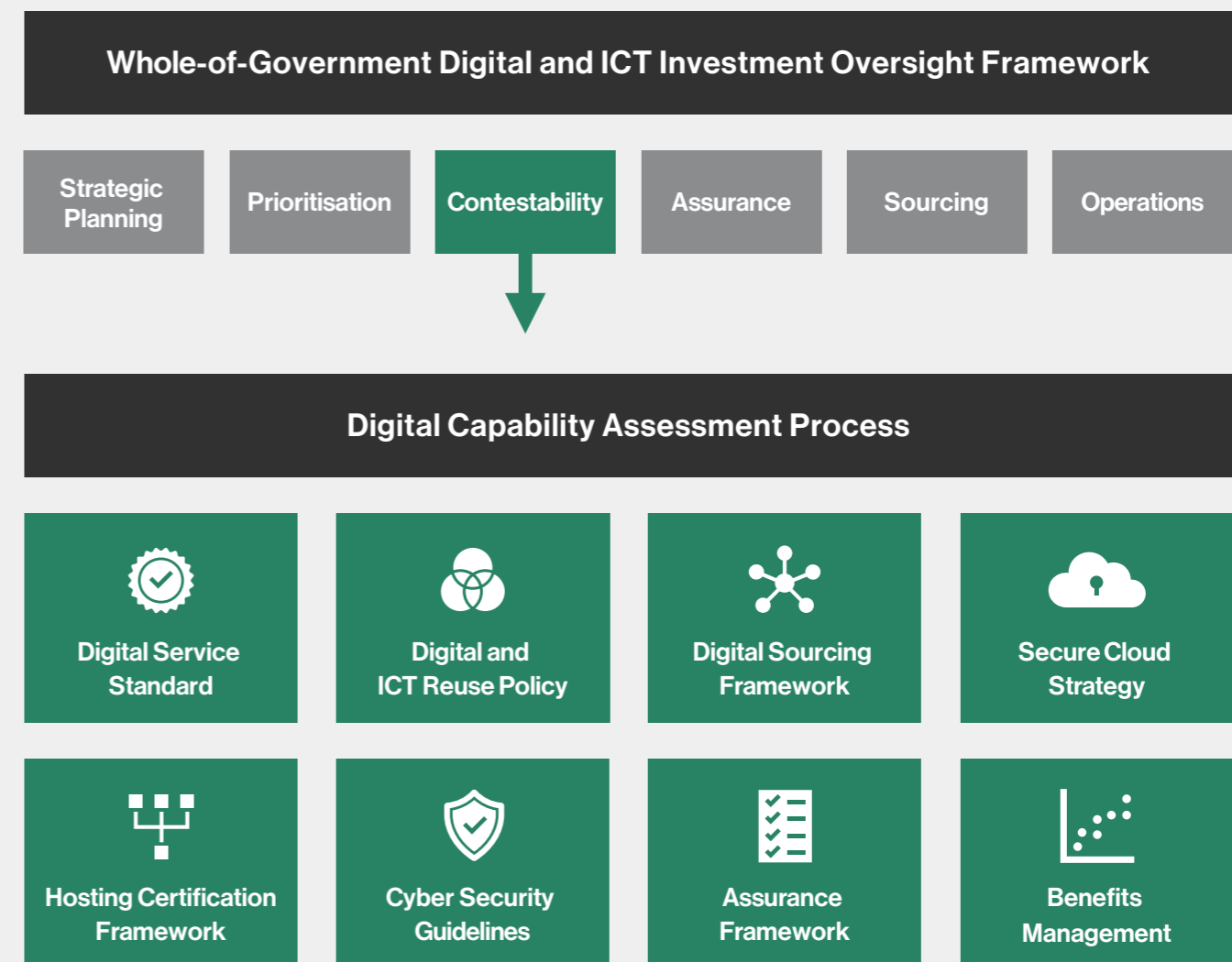
The purpose of the DCAP is to ensure all digital and ICT investment proposals are robust, align to common minimum standards, and include fit-for-purpose assurance, to meet the Australian Government's digital and ICT objectives. The DCAP underpins the Contestability (State 3) of the Investment Oversight Framework.

The DTA uses the DCAP to consistently assess all new digital and ICT investment proposals to advise Government.

The DTA assessment may determine whether the proposal goes forward for Government consideration.

Agencies should engage the DTA at the earliest opportunity when preparing digital and ICT investment proposals, to ensure there is sufficient time for the DTA to work with agencies to ensure their proposals align and comply with relevant whole-of-government digital and ICT policies and standards.

Where the Digital Capability Assessment Process fits within the Investment Oversight Framework



DCAP Policies and Standards for 2024-25 Budget

As part of the 2024-25 Budget process, Government requires that all digital and ICT investment proposals align and comply with the following whole-of-government digital and ICT policies and standards (DCAP Areas):

Digital Service Standard – The Digital Service Standard ensures that government services are designed in a human-centred way. Agencies must assess and comply with the principles of the DSS to ensure continuous improvement opportunities in support of effective project delivery.

Digital and ICT Reuse Policy – The Digital and ICT Reuse Policy ensures a whole-of-government focus on reuse of digital and ICT capabilities. Reuse also incorporates elements of the Australian Government Architecture.

Digital Sourcing Framework – The Digital Sourcing Framework and the four associated digital sourcing policies ensure government buyers source digital products and services that enable a modern digital government.

Secure Cloud Strategy – The Secure Cloud Strategy aims to increase the take-up of cloud services by Commonwealth agencies. It outlines the requirements and security controls for Commonwealth agencies to assist in assessing cloud service providers and cloud services.

Hosting Certification Framework – The Hosting Certification Framework is integral to protecting Australian Government systems and the data they hold. It provides guidance to Australian Government agencies, enabling them to identify and source hosting services that meet enhanced privacy, sovereignty, and security requirements.

Cyber Security Guidelines – The Cyber Security Guidelines in the DCAP work to ensure government digital services and systems meet minimum cyber security standards based on technical guidelines published by the Australian Signals Directorate's (ASD) Australian Cyber Security Centre (ACSC).

Assurance Framework – The Australian Government's Assurance Framework helps provide Ministers and other key stakeholders with confidence that assurance is being applied effectively to support successful delivery of digital and ICT investments.

Benefits Management – Benefits Management enables the identification, measurement, planning, and realisation of project benefits through a structured approach that provides program sponsors and Government with the confidence that digital and ICT-enabled investments will achieve their intended objectives.

How to apply the DCAP

To assist agencies in complying with the DCAP, the DTA has developed the *DCAP Assessment Tool* to:

- raise awareness of whole-of-government digital and ICT policies and standards;
- enable agencies to substantiate how their proposal aligns to whole-of-government digital and ICT policies and standards; and
- enable the DTA to assess digital and ICT proposals in a consistent, coordinated, and robust manner, to provide advice to inform Government consideration of the proposal.

To access the DCAP Assessment Tool, please contact investment@dta.gov.au and ensure a proposal is being brought forward in the Budget process.

How to use the DCAP Assessment Tool

The *DCAP Assessment Tool* (the Tool) is an Excel workbook for agencies to complete when submitting a new digital and ICT investment proposal. When completing the Tool, agencies are required to consider how their new digital and ICT investment proposal aligns/complies with the eight DCAP Areas.

Each DCAP Area is underpinned by detailed criteria describing key requirements agencies must consider when designing digital and ICT proposals. Each criterion provides detailed guidance on how to demonstrate alignment/compliance.

Agencies must describe and provide evidence to substantiate how their proposal aligns/complies with each DCAP Area. The suitability of evidence is based on the extent it answers the criterion.

The Tool contains the following worksheets:

- **Instructions** – to step the user through how to complete each worksheet.
- **A. Proposal details** – to identify the proposal, summarise its strategic objective, and identify its capabilities (see How to complete the Australian Government Architecture (AGA) Domain and Capability Model on next page).
- **B. Domain and Capability Model (DCM)** – to assist agencies in completing the corresponding ‘Australian Government Architecture Domain and Capability Model’ (DCM) question on the ‘A. Proposal Details’ worksheet.
- **C-J. Eight DCAP Area** – to consider and substantiate how the proposal aligns/complies with each DCAP Area.
- **K. More Information** – to assist agencies in guiding their responses.
- **DCAP Assessment (for internal use)** – records the outcome of the DTA assessment of the proposal.

When completing the Tool, please note:

- Agencies are required to provide a response to all DCAP Areas and criteria. Where the agency believes a particular DCAP Area is not applicable, or is unable to address a particular DCAP Area, please use ‘no’ in the relevant drop-down box and provide a detailed explanation.
- If the DTA considers the DCAP Area applicable, the agency will be required to provide a full response and supporting information.
- If a DCAP Area is not relevant to a proposal, it is the agency’s responsibility to notify the DTA of any changes to the proposal that may alter that assessment.
- Where a proposal materially changes following a review by the DTA which then brings a previously not applicable DCAP Area in-scope, this area will need to be assessed by the DTA.
- The DTA may, at its discretion, advise the agency of specific response requirements, including but not limited to an alternate form of the tool.

How to complete the Australian Government Architecture (AGA) Domain and Capability Model

The AGA is a collection of digital artefacts and guidance material that is organised through the domain and capability model (DCM). The DCM provides the structure for grouping and classifying digital solutions, making them easy to find and understand, to support Agencies navigate the complexity of the digital policy environment.

By identifying the relevant domain and capability in the DCAP tooling you can narrow the scope of the information relevant to your specific type of digital investment.

Most proposals have a primary focus of outcomes, such as toward businesses, or to individuals, or internal agency uplift. These focuses help identify the relevant domain in the AGA – this might be Business Experience, Individual Experience or Staff Experience respectively.

Within these domains, capabilities are a conceptual representation of the types of digital functions common to domains, for example Case Management or Payments as common to Government Service Delivery.

Most proposals, even complex proposals, can be distilled down to just a few key capability areas.

In “A. Proposal details worksheet”, under Domain and Capability, use the link to view the DCM. Select ‘yes’ against the corresponding DCM capabilities that best apply to your proposal. These selections will assist the DTA in providing agencies with further guidance and advice.

Agencies can also access the relevant policies, standards and designs within the capabilities to understand the directions of government specifically in relation to their proposal’s deliverables.

Seek the support of your project’s IT expert, agency CIO or IT architect to determine what DCMs apply to your proposal or contact the Architecture branch at the DTA (architecture@dta.gov.au).

More information is available on the AGA website:

AGA Homepage
(architecture.digital.gov.au)

How is the DCAP assessed by the DTA

The DTA will assess the agency statements made against each DCAP Area criterion along with the evidence provided.

The DTA will provide feedback to the agency against each DCAP Area in its DCAP Assessment. Engaging with the DTA at the earliest opportunity is strongly recommended to ensure there is sufficient time to address areas where alignment has yet to be achieved.

The DTA will use the DCAP Assessment to advise the Government on the DTA position on the proposal.

Agencies should provide their DCAP Assessment to the DTA as soon as suitable evidence can be supplied.

Further Information

Further information on each of the DCAP Areas can be found in the next section on DCAP Policies and Standards – Factsheet.

This Guide is updated periodically in line with policy updates and in response to agency feedback.

If you need additional information, please contact the DTA at:

investment@dta.gov.au

DCAP Policies and Standards

1. Digital Service Standard



Overview

The Digital Service Standard (the Standard) establishes the requirements for designing and delivering digital government services. These principles are informed by best practice human-centred design (HCD) frameworks and concepts.

These principles incorporate ideas from leading digital governments and jurisdictions globally.

The need for user-driven design is central to the Australian Government's digital transformation agenda. The government recently released an initial [Data and Digital Government Strategy](#) outlining their vision to deliver simple, secure, and connected public services for all people and business through world class data and digital capabilities.

The Standard puts people and business at the centre of government digital service delivery, and aims to help agencies meet a minimum standard and build toward better practice standards of user-driven design by assessing against and providing guidance on:

- identifying user groups and their needs
- understanding user experience, the context (ecosystem) and – when the end users are the public – taking a life event perspective
- co-designing future states to balance desirability, feasibility, and viability
- measuring and evaluating user needs and experience for continuous improvement.

Version 2.0 of the Standard was released in December 2023 and sets new requirements on agencies for delivering digital services, including the inclusion of new staff-facing services. To support agencies to meet the new Standard, the implementation of Version 2.0 of the Standard will be phased to give agencies time to plan and update their services:

- **Phase 1 (New services)** to meet the new Standard by 1 July 2024
- **Phase 2 (Existing public-facing services)** to meet the new Standard by 1 July 2025

For the 2024-25 MYEFO context, agencies going through the DCAP Assessment will be required to meet Version 2.0 of the Standard.

While agencies are not required to comply with Version 2.0 of the Standard until 1 July 2024, agencies may wish to consider the requirements of the new Standard when developing their proposals.

More information on the Version 2.0 of the Standard is available on the DTA's website:

[The Digital Service Standard](#)
[Digital Transformation Agency](#)
 [\(dta.gov.au\)](https://dta.gov.au)

Assessment Requirements

For the 2024-25 Budget process, agencies going through the DCAP Assessment will be required to meet Version 1.0 of the DSS Standard.

The Standard applies to the following Australian Government Services:

- public facing; and
- owned by [non-corporate commonwealth entities](#); and
- new informational or transactional services; and/or
- existing high-volume transactional services.

More information on the Standard is available on the Australian Government Architecture website:

[Digital Service Standard v1.0](#)
[Australian Government Architecture](#)



Overview

The [Digital and ICT Reuse Policy](#) aims to reduce duplication of investment and long-term costs involved in digital and ICT delivery across government. It also helps drive lower build and run costs, increase speed and certainty of delivery, and provide more joined-up services for people and businesses.

Under this policy, agencies must consider three key requirements when designing, proposing, or delivering new government capabilities with a digital and ICT component or improving existing ones:

- 1. Reuse whenever possible** – agencies must plan for and make use of any opportunities to reuse existing technology and architecture that is both supported and secure, business capability and process, procurement, information and data, skills, and capabilities within their agency and across government.
- 2. Design and build for reuse** – if agencies can't reuse an existing solution, they must ensure anything new they create can be reused by other agencies.
- 3. Enable reuse by others** – agencies must ensure anything new they propose to create is shared for others to reuse unless there's a good reason not to. There should be evidence that agencies have consulted the DTA to ensure reuse opportunities are not already available across the Australian Public Service (APS).

Interaction with the Australian Government Architecture

Reuse opportunities may also be informed by the Australian Government Architecture (AGA).

Agencies will be able to search the architecture via high level capability domains or via the discrete capabilities that they are seeking to deliver as part of their proposal.

As the AGA is released iteratively it will provide designs and patterns for reuse for a growing number of capability areas of Government operation and service. Prior to Government agreement of the AGA policy, the AGA should only be referred to in relation to the application of patterns and designs for reuse. Agencies can easily identify relevant reusable patterns and designs within the AGA through worksheet 'B.DCM selections' in the DCAP Assessment Tool. Agencies should contact the Architecture team (architecture@dta.gov.au) if they are unsure of where their capability might sit within the DCM model.

More information is available on the AGA website:

[AGA Homepage](#)
(architecture.digital.gov.au)

Assessment Requirements

Where agencies are developing a new capability that does not yet exist in government, they must consider how that capability could be reused in the future to help the APS achieve desired outcomes more efficiently.

These considerations must be made at the beginning of an investment before work starts on capability build or the contracting of providers.

Agencies should consider reuse as a principle for all investment activities.

The DTA will assess all Digital and ICT proposals against the policy. This includes proposals to change or create all types of government services.

More information on the Digital and ICT Reuse Policy is available on the DTA's website:

[Digital and ICT Reuse Policy](#)
[Digital Transformation Agency](#)
(dta.gov.au)

3. Digital Sourcing Framework



Overview

Sourcing (including procurement) plays an important role in the successful delivery of ICT and digital investments. It covers every part of the acquisition, sustainment, and disposal of an investment, from identifying a need to managing delivery, to end-of-life arrangements.

The Digital Sourcing Framework is a set of principles, policies, and guidance that guides agencies on how to buy digital products and services on behalf of the Australian Government. It provides benefits for buyers and sellers, with policies aimed at reducing procurement risk and gives better access to small and medium enterprises offering innovative agile solutions. This also introduces scope for innovation and a wider range of solutions by widening the supplier base.

The policies within the Digital Sourcing Framework are:

- [Consider First](#)
- [Digital Panels](#)
- [Fair Criteria](#)
- [Contract Limits and Reviews](#)

To meet these requirements, agencies must demonstrate suitability against the four Digital Principles of being Secure, Effective, Connected and Sustainable.

Assessment Requirements

All submissions that include a digital sourcing component will be assessed against the Digital Sourcing Framework. The degree and approach of assessment may vary as the sourcing arrangements become clear through the process. For example, in New Policy Proposals, knowledge of the policies and the procurement plan approach should be targeted as further detailed information, such as contractual arrangements, may not be known. The assessment should be more comprehensive at the second pass business case development.

More information on the Digital Sourcing Policy is available on the DTA's website:

[Digital Sourcing Policy](#)
[Digital Transformation Agency](#)
 [\(dta.gov.au\)](http://dta.gov.au).



Overview

The Secure Cloud Strategy is designed to help agencies transition to cloud-based services while maintaining appropriate security and functionality. The strategy was developed with reference and alignment to the following existing guidelines:

- The [Australian Government Protective Security Policy Framework](#) (PSPF) which assists Australian Government entities to protect their people, information, and assets both at home and overseas. The PSPF was developed by the Attorney-General's Department (AGD) and sets out government protective security policy and supports entities to effectively implement the policy across the following outcomes: security governance, information security, personnel security, and physical security.
- The [Information Security Manual](#) (ISM) is an information control framework that can be used to harden and protect cloud-based services. The ISM was developed by the Australian Signals Directorate's (ASD) Australian Cyber Security Centre (ACSC) within the Australian Signals Directorate and provides guidelines and principles for agencies preparing or undergoing the transition to the cloud.

Using cloud-based services can deliver the following benefits:

- increases the speed of delivering new platforms
- allows for continuous improvement
- provides easier access to services
- reduces the effort needed for maintenance and allow agencies to focus on improving service delivery
- provides a shared risk model to mitigate cyber risks.

Assessment Requirements

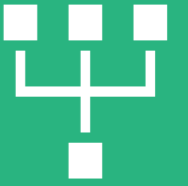
All proposals will be assessed against the Secure Cloud Strategy. The following principles must be considered:

- make risk-based decisions when applying cloud security
- design services for the cloud
- use public cloud services by default
- use as much of the cloud as possible
- avoid customisation and use cloud services as they come
- take full advantage of cloud automation practices
- monitor the health and usage of cloud services in real time.

The Secure Cloud Strategy is available on the DTA's website:

[Secure Cloud Strategy](#)
[Digital Transformation Agency](#)
 [\(dta.gov.au\)](https://dta.gov.au)

5. Hosting Certification Framework



Overview

The [Whole-of-Government Hosting Strategy](#) provides a whole-of-government approach for hosting services used by the Australian Government. This strategy provides policy direction and guidance for different hosting service models, including agency hosted, managed service provision, and cloud-based software-as-a-service.

The [Hosting Certification Framework \(HCF\)](#) has been developed to operationalise the principles outlined in the whole-of-government Hosting Strategy, and to support the secure management of government systems and data. It supports the Government's commitment to privacy, security, and resilience, while improving the delivery of government services.

The HCF assists agencies to mitigate supply chain and data centre ownership risks and enable them to identify and source appropriate hosting and related services.

The DTA certifies and maintains a list of all certified hosting providers that offer certified data centre and cloud hosting services to government.

Assessment Requirements

All proposals delivering digital/data capabilities will be assessed against the HCF. All hosting procurements should use Certified Service Providers. Australian Government entities continue to have the autonomy to select the best hosting arrangements to suit their requirements.

The DCAP assessment will consider two elements:

- Assessment of the sensitivity or classification of the data.
- Compliance with the HCF for procuring a Certified Provider.

The following HCF principles apply to Australian Government hosting arrangements:

- Hosting arrangements must be designed to ensure resilience and business continuity.
- Hosting arrangements must be founded on robust, risk-based assessments to ensure data sovereignty and supply chain integrity.
- Existing policies and certification processes should be used where appropriate.
- Where common hosting requirements are identified across the APS, centralised arrangements should be accessible and leveraged.
- Government entities continue to have the autonomy to select the best hosting arrangements for their requirements.

From 30 June 2022, all new and extensions to existing contracts for hosting services should be with a Certified Service Provider(s). Visit the [HCF website](#) for guidance on procurements involving a provider who is not yet certified.

More information on the HCF is available on the HCF website:

[Hosting Certification Framework \(hostingcertification.gov.au\)](#)

6. Cyber Security Guidelines



Overview

This DCAP Area, based on existing Australian Signals Directorate's (ASD) Australian Cyber Security Centre (ACSC) technical advice and guidance, identifies key standards, practices and procedures that are designed to harden and protect technology and information from information from cyber threats.

The DTA's advice on this DCAP Area focuses on ensuring agencies adhere to relevant guidance in a manner which promotes and maintains the security, resilience, and reliability of information and technology assets.

The set of Cyber Security Guidelines agencies must apply will continually evolve, as they are not owned or maintained by the DTA. The list below is not exhaustive but should provide an appropriate guide for agencies to consider, along with their own internal Cyber Security capabilities.

Information Security Manual

The ASD's ACSC produces the [Information Security Manual \(ISM\)](#). The manual provides a cyber security framework that organisations can apply using their risk management framework to protect their systems and data from cyber threat.

The Protective Security Policy Framework (PSPF)

The [Protective Security Policy Framework \(PSPF\)](#) assists Australian Government entities to protect their people, information, and assets both at home and overseas. The PSPF was developed by the Attorney-General's Department (AGD) and sets out government protective security policy and supports entities to effectively implement the policy across the following outcomes: security governance, information security, personnel security, and physical security.

In relation to Cyber Security, entities must articulate how they achieve the core requirements for:

- **10:** Safeguarding data from cyber threats; and
- **11:** Robust ICT Systems are legislated requirements for Non-corporate Commonwealth Entities.

The Infosec Registered Assessors Program (IRAP)

The [IRAP](#) ensures entities can access high-quality security assessment services. ASD's ACSC endorses suitably-qualified cyber security professionals to provide relevant services which aim to secure broader industry and Australian Government systems and data.

Endorsed IRAP assessors assist in securing your systems and data by independently assessing your cyber security posture, identifying security risks and suggesting mitigation measures. However, IRAP assessors do not accredit, certify, endorse or register systems on behalf of ASD.

Assessment Requirements

Cyber security is a critical enabler of all digital capabilities. It is expected that all proposals will be able to provide some level of response around how they will ensure the proposed solution will be secure. The level of depth will be dependent on the particulars of each proposal and the stage of its development.

The DTA is required to assess all proposals against guidelines published by the ASD's ACSC including the ISM. These guidelines are owned and managed by the ASD's ACSC. The DTA's role extends only to ensuring proposals have sufficiently demonstrated an intent to comply.

Where agencies need clarification on ASD's ACSC guidelines, queries should be directed to the ASD's ACSC:

www.cyber.gov.au and

asd.assist@defence.gov.au



Overview

Under its mandate, the DTA is responsible for providing Ministers, the Secretaries' Digital and Data Committee, and other key stakeholders with confidence that assurance is being applied effectively to support successful delivery of digital and ICT investments.

This assurance oversight is centred on the Australian Government's Assurance Framework for Digital and ICT investments (the Assurance Framework). The Assurance Framework sets out minimum assurance requirements for in-scope investment proposals. The Assurance Framework also links to a tiering model which ensures fit-for-purpose assurance arrangements are prepared which align with the risk profile and scope of each proposed investment. Should the proposal be agreed, these arrangements are required to be calibrated as delivery continues to ensure they remain fit-for-purpose.

The [Assurance Framework's](#) goal is to maximise the value of assurance to successful delivery of digital and ICT investments, drawing on global experience and learnings. To achieve this, the Assurance Framework aims to:

- Achieve carefully planned, targeted, and fit-for-purpose assurance for all in-scope investments, with assurance information applied effectively to improve the quality of decisions by Senior Responsible Officials and governance boards.
- Maximise the value of assurance in supporting successful delivery, including through ensuring agreed recommendations are implemented in a timely manner.
- Realise clear escalation processes which help agencies take decisive early action to recover investments at higher risk of not delivering expected benefits.
- Achieve a steady flow of reliable information on the condition of major investments for central agencies, supporting reporting and analysis for Cabinet and Ministers on the investment portfolio.

Importantly, the Assurance Framework ensures agencies remain accountable for leading the delivery of their proposal. The Assurance Framework is designed to complement and build on existing Australian Government assurance processes including Gateway Reviews.

Assessment Requirements

All digital and ICT investments that meet the eligibility criteria of the Investment Oversight Framework ([see page 4](#)) are required to develop and agree to fit-for-purpose assurance requirements under the Assurance Framework. This occurs as part of the broader DCAP assessment process.

Requirements under the Assurance Framework differ depending on the tier of an investment with the tier determined by the DTA.

The following key principles for good Assurance should be considered when developing proposals:

- Plan for assurance
- Drive good decisions
- Expert-led and independent
- Culture and tone at the top
- Focus on risks and Outcomes

More information on the Assurance Framework is available on the DTA's website:

[Assurance](#)
[Digital Transformation Agency](#)
 [\(dta.gov.au\)](https://dta.gov.au)

8. Benefits Management Policy



Overview

Benefits management improves Government decision-making and realisation of investment objectives.

The Benefits Management Policy establishes and standardises the management and reporting of benefits across the Government's digital and ICT portfolio and enables agencies to better articulate proposal alignment with whole-of-government strategic objectives. The BMP consists of a:

- Policy that sets out eight key principles that underpin benefits management best practice. It explains **why** a consistent approach to benefits management is essential for digital and ICT investments.
- Standard that outlines **what** agencies must do to comply with the Policy. It establishes the four criteria against which proposals are assessed at the Contestability state of the Investment Oversight Framework.
- Guidance section that introduces key benefits management concepts. It explains **how** agencies comply with the Policy.
- Process that defines **when** benefits management activities occur in the context of the investment lifecycle.

Assessment Requirements

The BMP explains how investment proposals are assessed during the Contestability state of the Investment Oversight Framework.

The Standard sets out the four criteria used to assess compliance with the BMP. Specifically, proposals are required to:

- document benefit dependencies and explain how individual benefits contribute to strategic objectives
- identify specific and measurable benefits and document baseline and target measures
- articulate fit-for-purpose governance arrangements that incorporate benefits management
- be supported by a suitable benefits realisation plan.

More information on the BMP is available on the DTA website:

Policies
[Digital Transformation Agency \(dta.gov.au\)](https://dta.gov.au)

Useful Resources

When determining the level of compliance with the BMP, agencies are free to use existing tools, templates, and guidance from their respective

enterprise level benefits management frameworks, provided they meet the criteria set out in the Standard.

There are also a number of resources published by other government jurisdictions that may be of use to agencies that do not have a dedicated benefits management suite. DTA recommends the following resources:

- [UK Government - Managing Benefits from Projects and Programmes: Guide for Practitioners](#) provides general guidance for benefits management.
- [Victoria State Government - Investment Management Standard \(IMS\)](#) provides guidance for delivering benefit discovery workshops and mapping benefits using the Investment Logic Mapping (ILM) technique. This resource includes examples and a detailed practitioner's guide.
- [NSW State Government - Benefits Realisation Management Framework](#) includes a suite of templates such as benefits profiles and benefits realisation plan.



More information

For more information about the DCAP process, please contact the DTA's investment advisers by emailing investment@dta.gov.au