



Australian Government Information Security Manual: September 2021 Changes

SEPTEMBER 2021

Summary of content changes

Changes for the September 2021 update of the [Australian Government Information Security Manual](#) (ISM) are covered below.

Alignment with ML2 and ML3 of the updated *Essential Eight Maturity Model*

An updated version of the [Essential Eight Maturity Model](#) was released by the Australian Cyber Security Centre (ACSC) in July 2021. As such, the ISM has been updated to support both Maturity Level Two and Maturity Level Three from the updated publication. Organisations should pick one set of security controls depending on which Essential Eight maturity level they are implementing.

New Security Controls	Modified Security Controls	Rescinded Security Controls
1647, 1648, 1649, 1650, 1651, 1652, 1653, 1654, 1655, 1656, 1657, 1658, 1659, 1660, 1661, 1662, 1663, 1664, 1665, 1666, 1667, 1668, 1669, 1670, 1671, 1672, 1673, 1674, 1675, 1676, 1677, 1678, 1679, 1680, 1681, 1682, 1683, 1684, 1685, 1686, 1687, 1688, 1689, 1690, 1691, 1692, 1693, 1694, 1695, 1696, 1698, 1699, 1700, 1701, 1702, 1704, 1705, 1706, 1707, 1708	0304, 0380, 0843, 0957, 1173, 1175, 1235, 1380, 1387, 1401, 1407, 1412, 1467, 1470, 1485, 1486, 1487, 1488, 1490, 1501, 1504, 1505, 1507, 1508, 1509, 1511, 1515, 1544, 1582, 1585, 1621	1382, 1384, 1484, 1512, 1513, 1514, 1516, 1541

Patching of drivers and firmware

As patching of drivers and firmware falls outside the scope of the updated *Essential Eight Maturity Model*, previous driver and firmware patching security controls tied to the *Essential Eight Maturity Model* have been replaced with new simplified versions.

New Security Controls	Modified Security Controls	Rescinded Security Controls
1697, 1703		0940, 1144, 1472, 1494, 1495, 1496

Bringing radio frequency and infrared devices into highly classified areas

The requirements for authorising, registering and tracking radio frequency and infrared devices brought into highly classified areas has been consolidated in order to provide greater flexibility for physical security authorities.

New Security Controls	Modified Security Controls	Rescinded Security Controls
	0225, 1543	0221,0222, 0223, 0224, 1058

Foreign nationals accessing PROTECTED systems

Foreign nationals were previously prohibited from accessing PROTECTED systems due to the risk of unauthorised access to Releasable To (REL) data. However, as REL data can no longer be processed, stored or communicated by PROTECTED systems, such security controls are no longer required.

New Security Controls	Modified Security Controls	Rescinded Security Controls
		0448, 0975

Approval for use of mobile devices with highly classified data

Approval for use (AFU) is required before keying material will be issued for mobile devices that process SECRET and above data. This pre-existing requirement is now reflected in the ISM to ensure alignment with existing procedures.

New Security Controls	Modified Security Controls	Rescinded Security Controls
	0687	

Complexity requirements for passphrases

As passphrase lengths are already sufficient for their intended purpose without complexity, the requirement to use complexity for passphrases has been removed to avoid confusion between long complex passwords and passphrases.

New Security Controls	Modified Security Controls	Rescinded Security Controls
	0421, 0422, 1557	

Virtualisation requirements for public cloud services

Functional separation between computing environments for PROTECTED public cloud services is sufficiently covered by a combination of existing security controls and additional bespoke measures implemented by cloud service providers.

New Security Controls	Modified Security Controls	Rescinded Security Controls
		1462

Use of WPA3 as an ASD Approved Cryptographic Protocol

Wi-Fi Protected Access 3 (WPA3) has been endorsed as an ASD Approved Cryptographic Protocol (AAP). In addition, wireless security requirements have been amended to reflect the use of WPA3 in enterprise-grade wireless networks.

New Security Controls	Modified Security Controls	Rescinded Security Controls
1709, 1710, 1711, 1712	1314, 1321, 1322, 1323, 1327, 1332, 1454	1325, 1326

Use of Enhanced Mitigation Experience Toolkit (EMET)

The requirement to use EMET has been rescinded as support was withdrawn by Microsoft over three years ago. All currently supported versions of Microsoft Windows 10 include the successor exploit protection functionality.

New Security Controls	Modified Security Controls	Rescinded Security Controls
		1414

Sanitising network devices

Requirements for sanitising network devices was updated to ensure product evaluation documentation is followed instead of specific ACSC guidance. This ensures that regardless of which national scheme evaluates a product under the Common Criteria the relevant advice will be followed.

New Security Controls	Modified Security Controls	Rescinded Security Controls
	1223	

Minor changes

Minor changes were made to security controls, including changes to terminology to ensure consistency with the updated version of the [Essential Eight Maturity Model](#) (e.g. replacing 'standard users' with 'unprivileged users').

New Security Controls	Modified Security Controls	Rescinded Security Controls
1713	0189, 0300, 0310,0336, 0405, 0457, 0460, 0484, 0572, 0974, 1161, 1263, 1417, 1491, 1492, 1503, 1566, 1584, 1589	0159, 0190

Contact details

If you have any questions regarding this guidance you can [write to us](#) or call us on 1300 CYBER1 (1300 292 371).