



International Standards and Risk Assessments Criteria

Background

The Government released its Industry Innovation and Competitiveness Agenda on 14 October 2014. A major component of this policy announcement was that the Government will adopt the principle that if a system, service or product has been approved under a trusted international standard or risk assessment, then our regulators should not impose any additional requirements for approval in Australia, unless it can be demonstrated that there is a good reason to do so.

What is a trusted international standard or risk assessment?

Trusted international standards and risk assessments in this context could include those agreed multilaterally (e.g. through the World Trade Organisation) or standards or assessments from certain overseas jurisdictions that are at the forefront of international best practice.

In this case a regulator's only role would be to ensure compliance with the standard and not define or specify unique Australian standard or additional requirements.

Factors that could guide this assessment might include, but are not be limited to, whether the overseas regulating authority has:

- A credible and consistent track record in regulating;
- A publicly transparent assessment processes in place and provides full access to reports and the data its regulatory decision is based on;
- A record of actively managing the quality of approvals and risk assessment (such as peer review, independent assessment, auditing of processes and outcomes).

Why adopt international standards and risk assessments?

The adoption of international standards and risk assessments can reduce duplication of regulatory approvals, reduce delays, increase competition and improve business competitiveness in Australia. This supports the Government's overall objective to reduce the regulatory burden on business, community organisations, families and individuals.

How is the policy to be applied?

Portfolios are required to take the lead in implementing the policy as part of their contribution to remove ineffective and unnecessary red tape in the areas of regulation they are responsible for by developing criteria that are a best fit for the regulatory frameworks in a portfolio.

The criteria will form the basis for formation of the judgements by portfolios about international standards and risk assessments.

Defence activity supporting the Government's objective

While adopting international standards and risk assessments are less likely to be relevant to the Department of Defence, it has developed a clear criteria that they can use to assess the potential adoption of international standards and risk assessments.

The Defence will assess existing and future standards and risk assessments on a case-by-case basis using the criteria listed below and will monitor and review the criteria as needed.

- 1 Does an international standard or risk assessment exist?**
- 2 Is the international standard or risk assessment applicable in an Australian context?**
- 3 If adopted, would the international standard or risk assessment be sufficient to maintain or improve outcomes for business, individuals and community organisations?**
- 4 Would adoption of the standard or risk assessment reduce regulatory burden on business, individuals and community organisations?**
- 5 Is there a net benefit (a value or benefit that exceeds any costs) as a result of its adoption or implementation?**

Members of the public are invited to submit examples of unnecessary divergence from international standards on the cuttingredtape.gov.au website. Examples can be related to Defence or any other Commonwealth Government agency.