APEC Cross-Border Privacy Rules (CBPR) System

The APEC CBPR System is a voluntary, enforceable privacy certification that lets organizations transfer personal data across participating economies, now run by the Global CBPR Forum.



What it is

The APEC Cross-Border Privacy Rules (CBPR) System is a voluntary, accountability-based certification that lets organizations demonstrate that their privacy practices meet the APEC Privacy Framework so they can move personal information across participating economies. A certified organization commits to a published set of program requirements, is assessed by an independent Accountability Agent, and is subject to enforcement by a privacy regulator in its home jurisdiction.

At a glance

PUBLISHER Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC); Global CBPR Forum	TYPE Certification / Assurance Program	VERSION APEC CBPR System (2011); Global CBPR Framework (2023) and program requirements (valid to 31 March 2027; September 2025 update effective 1 April 2027)
EFFECTIVE 2011	DOMAIN Privacy	FAMILY APEC Privacy Framework
REGION APEC economies and Global CBPR Forum members	ADOPTION MODEL Certification	IMPLEMENTATION COMPLEXITY Medium

Source: cbprs.org/about-cbprs/

Why it matters

- **Enable lawful cross-border data transfers** The Global CBPR System bridges differing national privacy laws among Forum members and gives organizations a verified way to transfer personal information across jurisdictions.
- **Demonstrate accountability to regulators and customers** Independent assessment and a published certification mark show that privacy commitments are verified rather than self-declared.
- **Harmonize privacy controls across jurisdictions** One set of program requirements aligned with the APEC Privacy Framework and the OECD Privacy Guidelines supports compliance in several markets at once.
- **Extend assurance to processors** The companion PRP certification lets processors show controllers that they can meet CBPR obligations on their behalf.

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How SmartSuite supports APEC CBPR System

CBPR Program Requirements Library

Load the 50 program requirements under their eight program headings and link each to policies and procedures.

Ownership, Cadence, and Recertification

Assign requirement owners, schedule reviews, and track the recertification and monitoring cycle with the Accountability Agent.

Evidence Collection and Audit Trail

Attach privacy statements, contracts, and training records to each requirement with timestamps and reviewers.

Assessment and Gap Remediation

Record intake questionnaire answers, Accountability Agent findings, and remediation tasks through to closure.

Third-Party Transfer and Processor Oversight

Track onward transfers, processor contracts, and PRP status for the vendors that handle certified data.

Privacy Program Reporting

Report certification status, open findings, complaints, and transfer inventories to privacy leadership and regulators.

Common framework mappings

APEC PF · OECD Privacy Guidelines · GDPR · UK GDPR · US DPF · Convention 108+ · ISO 27701 · ISO 29100 · NIST Privacy Framework v1.0 · Privacy Act 1988 (APPs) · APPI · PIPA (South Korea) · Singapore PDPA · Philippines DPA (RA 10173)

Official resources

Global CBPR Forum Privacy Certifications

Explains the Global CBPR and PRP certifications and how organizations are certified through Accountability Agents.

globalcbpr.org/privacy-certifications

Global CBPR Framework (2023)

Sets out the nine Global CBPR Privacy Principles that underpin the CBPR and PRP program requirements.

globalcbpr.org/wp-content/uploads/Global-CBPR-Framework-2023.pdf

Global CBPR System Program Requirements

Lists the 50 program requirements and assessment criteria Accountability Agents use for CBPR certification.

globalcbpr.org/wp-content/uploads/Global-CBPR-Program-Requirements_Final.pdf

About the APEC CBPR System

Describes the APEC CBPR System, its participating economies, Accountability Agents, and governance.

cbprs.org/about-cbprs

Frequently asked questions

What is the APEC CBPR System?

The APEC Cross-Border Privacy Rules (CBPR) System is a voluntary, accountability-based certification endorsed by APEC Leaders in 2011. A certified organization shows that its privacy practices meet the APEC Privacy Framework and can transfer personal data among participating economies. Since 2022 the Global CBPR Forum has run the global version of the certification.

Is APEC CBPR certification mandatory?

No. Certification is voluntary, but once an organization is certified its commitments become enforceable by the privacy enforcement authority in its jurisdiction. Whether a destination country accepts the certification as a transfer mechanism depends on that country's law, so check each one.

How does an organization get APEC CBPR certified?

An organization completes the intake questionnaire covering the 50 program requirements, submits its privacy statements, policies, and evidence to a Forum-recognized Accountability Agent, and closes any gaps the agent identifies. The agent then certifies the organization and monitors its compliance.

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What is the difference between CBPR and PRP?

CBPR certifies personal information controllers, the organizations that decide how personal data is used. Privacy Recognition for Processors (PRP) certifies processors that handle data on a controller's instructions and shows they can implement the controller's CBPR obligations.

Which jurisdictions take part in the APEC CBPR System, and who can be certified?

Nine APEC economies participate: the United States, Mexico, Japan, Canada, Singapore, the Republic of Korea, Australia, Chinese Taipei, and the Philippines. The Global CBPR Forum adds the Dubai International Financial Centre as a member and Bermuda, Mauritius, Nigeria, and the United Kingdom as associates. Certification is currently available to companies headquartered in Japan, the Republic of Korea, Singapore, Chinese Taipei, and the United States.

How does APEC CBPR relate to GDPR?

CBPR and GDPR are separate regimes, and CBPR certification is not recognized as a GDPR transfer mechanism. The two share principles such as notice, purpose limitation, security, and accountability, so organizations commonly map the 50 CBPR program requirements to their GDPR controls and run one privacy program for both.

License included / downloadable: Yes The CBPR Framework, program requirements, and intake questionnaire are published free of charge by the Global CBPR Forum and APEC; SmartSuite does not include the text within the platform.

Full framework page and mappings: smartsuite.com/frameworks/apec-cross-border-privacy-rules-cbpr-system

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