SmartSuite

Framework / Cloud Security / Other

ITSP.50.105 — Guidance on Cloud Security Assessment and Authorization

ITSP.50.105 is the Canadian Centre for Cyber Security's guidance for assessing a cloud service and its provider, authorizing the service and keeping that authorization current.



What it is

ITSP.50.105, Guidance on Cloud Security Assessment and Authorization, is the Canadian Centre for Cyber Security's publication that tells an organization how to assess the security controls of a cloud service and its provider, authorize the service for use, and keep that authorization current. It was published in May 2020, applies to private and public sector organizations, and is guidance, not a regulation.

The Cyber Centre, part of the Communications Security Establishment (CSE), issues it under the authority of the Chief of the CSE. It supports the cloud security risk management approach in ITSM.50.062 and cites the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat's Direction on the Secure Use of Commercial Cloud Services as a policy driver. It addresses cloud consumer organizations and the cloud service providers (CSPs) they use.

At a glance

PUBLISHER Canadian Centre for Cyber Security (CCCS)	TYPE Framework	VERSION ITSP.50.105 (May 2020, Practitioner series)
EFFECTIVE May 1, 2020	DOMAIN Cloud Security	FAMILY Other
REGION Canada	INDUSTRY Government & Public Sector	ADOPTION MODEL Voluntary
IMPLEMENTATION COMPLEXITY High		

Source: cyber.gc.ca/en/guidance/guidance-cloud-security-assessment-and-authorization-itsp50105

Why it matters

- **Evidence replaces vendor claims** The organization reviews formal third-party attestations and certifications because it cannot directly assess controls the provider runs (section 2.1).
- **Responsibility varies by model** In IaaS the organization assesses more components directly, while in PaaS and SaaS it relies more on independent assurance (section 2.2).
- **One decision, whole service** Authorization covers the entire cloud-based service, both the provider's cloud services and the organization's service hosted on them (section 4.3.2).
- **Gaps get a plan** Findings feed a plan of action and milestones that sets how the provider and the organization will correct deficiencies within an agreed timeline (section 4.3.2.1).

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How SmartSuite supports ITSP.50.105 (CSAG)

Cloud Service Assessment Packages

Hold the service model, target security categorization and selected control profile for each cloud service in one assessment record (section 3.2).

Shared Responsibility Matrix

Record which controls the provider implements and which the organization implements for each service (section 2.2).

Third-Party Report Register

Track each SOC report, ISO certificate or CSA STAR entry with its scope and coverage period, and flag reports due for renewal (sections 2.3 and 3.3.2).

Plan of Action and Milestones

Turn assessment gaps into tracked tasks with owners, milestones and due dates (section 4.3.2.1).

Authorization Decisions and Residual Risk

Store the authorization package, the authorizing official's decision and the conditions attached to it (section 4.3.2).

Authorization Maintenance Reporting

Show authorized services, expiring assurance reports, open plan items and reassessment dates on a dashboard (section 4.3.4).

Common framework mappings

CSA STAR | FedRAMP Rev. 5 | ISO 27001:2022 | ISO 27017 | ISO 27018 | NIST 800-53 Rev.5

Official resources

Cloud security risk management (ITSM.50.062)

The Cyber Centre's companion guidance on managing cloud security risk across the service lifecycle.

cyber.gc.ca/en/guidance/cloud-security-risk-management-itsm50062

Guidance on the Security Categorization of Cloud-Based Services (ITSP.50.103)

CCCS guidance on categorizing cloud-based services, the first step of the cloud security risk management approach that leads into assessment and authorization.

cyber.gc.ca/en/guidance/guidance-security-categorization-cloud-based-services-itsp50103

Guidance on Cloud Security Assessment and Authorization (ITSP.50.105)

The ITSP.50.105 publication: shared responsibility, assessment of provider and organizational controls, and the authorization decision.

cyber.gc.ca/en/guidance/guidance-cloud-security-assessment-and-authorization-itsp50105

Frequently asked questions

What is ITSP.50.105 used for?

It guides an organization through assessing the security controls of a cloud service and its provider, authorizing the service for use, and monitoring and maintaining that authorization. The Canadian Centre for Cyber Security published it in May 2020.

Is ITSP.50.105 mandatory?

It is guidance. It states that it applies to private and public sector organizations and cites Treasury Board and other policy documents as policy drivers, but it does not itself impose a legal requirement. Organizations apply it through their own security policies.

What is the shared responsibility model in ITSP.50.105?

Both the cloud provider and the organization are responsible for securing different components. The Cyber Centre control profiles show who implements each control. In IaaS the organization assesses more directly, while in PaaS and SaaS it relies more on independent third-party reports (section 2.2).

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What are the five phases of a cloud provider assessment?

Determine the applicable third-party reports, attestations and certifications; confirm their scope and period; review the detailed evidence; prepare the CSP assessment report; and perform continuous monitoring (section 3.2).

What happens after a cloud service is authorized?

The organization continues monitoring, typically requiring yearly third-party coverage in the contract. It reviews the security category, the threat environment and control performance, and it can temporarily protect, correct, accept new risk or revoke the authorization if residual risk stays unacceptable (section 4.3.4).

License included / downloadable: Yes ITSP.50.105 is published free by the Canadian Centre for Cyber Security at cyber.gc.ca and is included with the platform for reference.

Full framework page and mappings: smartsuite.com/frameworks/canada-csag-cloud-security-assessment-and-authorization-guidance

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