PREPARE TO ASSESS YOUR PROTECTIVE SECURITY CAPABILITY 2022/23

Kia ora koutou

The annual Protective Security Requirements (PSR) capability self-assessment round is now open.

Your Chief Executive is responsible for the self-assessment and final sign off of the report, which must be **submitted to the PSR Unit by 30 April 2023**.

Moderation of your self-assessment improves the quality and accuracy of your reporting. As always, we encourage you to have your self-assessment moderated.

Below is a summary of what you need to know before you assess your capability this round. New document templates and guides are available for download from the PSR website. A PSR Forum will also be held on 11 November 2022 with more information.

Minor improvements to the 2022/23 Self-Assessment Report

Based on your feedback we have made some minor improvements to the current self-assessment reporting for 2022/23. The changes are aimed to reduce duplication, make it easier to understand what and how to report, and enable greater reporting consistency across agencies. We have made the following changes:

The Capability Maturity Model (CMM) assessment section of the PSR Self-Assessment Report Template has been moved into a separate Capability Maturity Assessment Template.

The Capability Maturity Assessment Template is for your agency's internal use when you undertake your CMM assessment. You must still undertake this capability assessment and summarise your findings in your self-assessment report, however you will not need to provide the detailed evidence in your self-assessment report. This will reduce some of the duplication you have experienced when reporting.

The PSR Self-Assessment Report Template (MS Word) has been updated. Your self-assessment this year must be submitted via email. The online portal is not available.

The updated PSR Self-Assessment Report Template includes new guidance, instructions, and specific questions you need to consider when undertaking your self-assessment and completing your report.

Importantly, the online portal will not be used for submission of 2022/23 reports. Please use the MS Word template to complete your self-assessment and for reports at RESTRICTED and below submit this via email to the PSR Unit. [We will discuss submission for agencies with higher classified reports].

The separate INFOSEC questions have been incorporated into the relevant mandatory requirement sections and are no longer standalone.

The separate INFOSEC questions have been reviewed and updated. The updated questions have now been integrated directly into the relevant mandatory requirements sections which are designed to specifically elicit the evidence needed this year. This should also reduce the duplication experienced in previous reporting rounds.

A "How To" Guide is provided with examples of what good evidence looks like.

A new guide has been produced to demonstrate what is required to evidence the policy and practice for mandatory requirements. It provides real world anonymised examples. Combined with the updated PSR Self-Assessment Report Template, these tools should allow you to better understand what good evidence looks like. It should also improve consistency of reporting across agencies.

PSR Forum – 2022/23 Self-Assessment Reporting

We held an information and Q&A session on Friday 11 November to discuss specifically what you would need to know for this PSR self-assessment round. Two people per agency were invited (the CSO and primary person responsible for coordinating the self-assessment process).

Attendees heard from the PSR Team, NCSC Team, and some agencies on their experience of using the PSR CMM and Self-Assessment to review and plan their capability improvement. The attendees could then share the information with others in their organisation.

The briefing was held at RESTRICTED at Defence House.

Looking ahead: Reviewing the self-assessment framework and considering more fundamental changes in future rounds

After four years of using the current framework, stakeholders have raised some concerns about the CMM and the self-assessment reporting framework indicating that they are no longer fit for purpose. Some issues identified are:

- **Reporting is repetitive and inefficient**.

Questions and details are duplicative across the different sections of the template. This means agencies have to repeat answers in multiple sections. This makes it time consuming to report and adds little value to the overall assessment process.

- **Reporting of evidence is inconsistent between agencies.**

Agencies are unclear on how to report on their evidence of process and practice to meet the requirements and therefore each agency does it differently.

- **Reporting is not "decision useful"**.

It is difficult for agencies to show the progress they have made to improve their capability or to see where their capability gaps are. The variability in reporting also makes it difficult to provide system-level assurance of the protective security capability

across Government or help decide where additional investment, support, and focus is required.

- **Self-assessment optimism bias still exists.**

Without clarity on what good looks like, it is up to the evaluator to decide if their current capability meets the core requirements. Internal audit and moderation helps to reduce this bias but variability can still exist between different auditors and moderators. The self-assessment model may no longer be fit for purpose.

In response, the PSR Unit has initiated a review of the CMM and self-assessment framework to ensure it remains fit-for-purpose into the future. We will be engaging with agencies on this project soon to understand the issues and recommend and implement improvements. Our plan is to begin the review in November 2022 with the goal to have revisions ready for the 2023/24 assessment round. We will be in touch shortly on this.

If you have any further questions, please contact the PSR team on:

psr@protectivesecurity.govt.nz.

Ngā mihi nui ki a koe

Protective Security Requirements Team