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National Cyber Security Agency

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# National Information Security Compliance Framework (NISCF) – General Taxonomy for National Certification

[NCSA-NISCF-CERT-GTXD]

Document

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<b>Abstract</b>	<p>This document is the General Taxonomy Document for National Certification developed by the National Cyber Security Agency (NCSA) with the intended usage in the operation of National Information Security Compliance Framework (NISCF) Certification Services. This document provides definition of key terminologies used in NISCF Certification Services.</p>



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## 1. Introduction

National Cyber Security Agency (NCSA) created its Certification Services to provide assurance that organizations comply and conform with specific Cyber Security requirements defined in National and International Standards that are adopted by NCSA.

In effort to improve the Certification Services, NCSA developed this document, titled "National Information Security Compliance Framework (NISCF) – General Taxonomy for National Certification" - V 1.0 - C0 – Public / PS1 – Non-Personal Data (Non-PD), to provide the cyber space with definition of key terminologies used in NISCF Certification Services.



## 2. Purpose and Scope

### 2.1. Purpose

The purpose of this document is to provide provides definition of key terminologies used in NISCF Certification Services.

These definitions are specific to NISCF Certification Services.

### 2.2. Scope

The definition provided in the General Taxonomy Document for National Certification applies to all Certification Services that are offered by NCSA under the NISCF.

Definitions of terminologies can be provided in other documents of the NISCF, that may differ from these presented in this taxonomy document. In such cases, the definition provided in the other documents supersede these ones defined in this document.



### 3. Key Definitions

<b>Acceptance</b>	The action of formally communicating to an applicant applying for NISCF's Certification Services that the request received is suitable.
<b>Accountability</b>	State of accepting the fact of being the owner for decisions or actions performed or delegated and expected to explain them when needed. Accountability also includes remediation of any failure to act properly.
<b>Active</b>	Not expired, withdrawn, suspended, or terminated Certificate of Compliance.
<b>Administrative safeguards</b>	Establish standards and specifications for the NISCF Certification Services' Information Security Program.
<b>Advisory</b>	Providing opinions and points of view on a subject as professional.
<b>Appeal</b>	Request by an individual or an organization that is directly impacted by an NISCF Service decision made by NCSA to reconsider the decision that was made regarding its request for NISCF Service or its awarded certificate, title, credential or other demarcation.
<b>Applicant</b>	The organization that applied for NISCF Certification Services through formal request.
<b>Area of expertise</b>	A specific and particular field in Cyber Security.
<b>Assessment</b>	Process of getting a snapshot of the reality of a scope at a specific point in time to evaluate compliance. Assessment is similar to Audit, the difference is that Audit is more formal process, with higher level of assurance and more stringent evidence admissibility process.





<b>Assurance</b>	Reasonable level of confidence achieved by a third-party that an entity or an individual complies with and conforms to defined requirements, based on information provided by a trusted party.
<b>Attorney</b>	A person designated to act on behalf of another for legal related matters.
<b>Audit</b>	A rigorous process for obtaining appropriate and sufficient evidence about a scope of NISCF Certification Services request and evaluating it objectively, in conformance with specific evaluation standards, methods and procedures to determine conformance of the scope.
<b>Audit, Assessment, Evaluation and Examination Bodies (AAEEBs)</b>	Organizations that perform audits, assessments, evaluations, and examinations in relation to NISCF Certification Services.
<b>Authoritative Power</b>	The capability to use legitimacy to convince and govern.
<b>Authorized Representative</b>	Someone who was chosen by the applicant to NISCF's Certification Services or Certified organization to act on your behalf and that can legally engage the organization.
<b>Being in Debt</b>	Owing a monetary amount to someone or to an organization.
<b>Best practices</b>	Commercial or professional procedures that are accepted or prescribed as being correct or most effective.
<b>Certificate of Compliance</b>	Document issued by the Certification Body to a Certified Organization to evidence compliance.
<b>Certification</b>	Assurance provided by NCSA that an entity or an individual has been determined as compliant after going through a formal audit,



assessment, evaluation or examination procedure by an authorized independent entity.

<b>Certification Body</b>	The moral entity that performs and provides NISCF Certification Services operation.
<b>Certification Services</b>	Services offered by the Certification Body that have for goal to provide Certification.
<b>Certified Organization</b>	Organization that has been granted an NISCF Certification Services Certificate of Compliance.
<b>Complaint</b>	Expression of dissatisfaction, other than appeal, by a third-party to NCSA relating to NISCF Services.
<b>Compliance</b>	The result of an entity meeting its obligations against a specified set of criteria.
<b>Conclusion</b>	Outcome of an audit, assessment or evaluation, after consideration of the compliance criteria and related findings.
<b>Confidentiality</b>	Property that information is not made available or disclosed to unauthorized individuals, entities, or processes.
<b>Conflict of interests</b>	Situations that impair, or could reasonably be perceived by the National Cyber Security Ecosystem to impair, the objectivity of the Accreditation Body, persons in charge with its governance and / or management, employees, sub-contractors, and partners.
<b>Conformance</b>	Demonstrate that specific requirements are fulfilled.
<b>Consultancy</b>	Providing guidance and advise in a specific matter.
<b>Control</b>	Safeguards or countermeasures to avoid, detect, counteract, or minimize security risks to physical property, information, computer systems, or other assets.



<b>Controlling Financially and / or Legally</b>	A control of the governance decisions of an organization through financial or legal means.
<b>Corrective Actions Plan</b>	A detailed plan of actions that is developed to achieve targeted outcomes for resolution of identified non-conformities.
<b>Counselor</b>	A person that give guidance on personal or psychological level to government members or boards members of private organizations.
<b>Credential</b>	Earned title for a person supporting its suitability and ability in relation to specific aspect of the NISCF Services.
<b>Custodian</b>	Person or organization responsible for the administration of data.
<b>Data owner</b>	Person or organization accountable for the risks related to data.
<b>Decision</b>	Conclusion, based on results of review, that fulfilment of specified requirements has or has not been demonstrated.
<b>Delegation</b>	The process of transferring the responsibility to perform certain activities to a third-party. Accountability cannot be delegated.
<b>Demarcation</b>	Actions leading to establishing boundaries or limits in relation to what is considered related nor not to the NISCF Services.
<b>Denial</b>	Refusal of a request.
<b>Eligible</b>	Being suitable and having the right to perform a specific action or request specific service.
<b>Employee</b>	Person that has a direct employment contract with an entity.



<b>Engagement</b>	Formal agreement to perform defined operation.
<b>Evaluation</b>	Combination of the selection and determination functions of conformance assessment operation.
<b>Evidence</b>	All the information used by AAEEBs in arriving at the conclusions for conformance and compliance of a scope. AAEEBs are not expected to address all information that may exist. Evidence, which is cumulative in nature, includes audit evidence obtained from audit, assessment, evaluation, or examination procedures performed during the course of the audit, assessment, evaluation or examination and may include audit, assessment, evaluation or examination evidence obtained from other sources.
<b>Examination</b>	Mechanism that is part of the assessment which measures an applicant's competence by one or more means, such as written, oral, practical, and observational, as defined in the NISCF Certification Services.
<b>Expiry</b>	End of a period for which an element was considered valid.
<b>Financial safeguards</b>	Financial funds and controls to ensure going concern of and coverage of liabilities arising from the NISCF Certification Services.
<b>Fourth (4<sup>th</sup>) Degree of Consanguinity or Affinity</b>	“Consanguinity” is a relationship by blood. “Affinity” is a relationship by marriage. 4 <sup>th</sup> degree refer to four level of relationships between two individuals.
<b>Governance</b>	A system by which an entity is directed, overseen, and held accountable for achieving its defined purpose.
<b>Holding a Significant Credit</b>	Being creditor of a monetary amount that is material to the creditor.



<b>Impartiality</b>	Objectivity with regard to the outcome of the Certification Body operation.
<b>Independent review</b>	Assessment by an independent entity from the AAEEBs of the suitability, adequacy and effectiveness of the audit, assessment or evaluation operation and their results regarding conformance of a scope.
<b>Informative</b>	Information provided for guidance only and should be followed as best practices.
<b>Law</b>	Set of rules published under the title "law" by an authorized government entity.
<b>Legal identification</b>	Basic characteristics of an organization or individual documented in an official document issued by a government authority.
<b>Legally enforceable agreement</b>	Contract that holds its signatories legally accountable and / or responsible for the duties in defined the contract in a specified jurisdiction.
<b>Lifecycle</b>	Different stages by which an NISCF Certification Service can pass by.
<b>Maintenance</b>	Iteration of conformance audits, assessments, evaluations, or examinations operation basis for maintaining the validity of a Certificate of Compliance.
<b>Management</b>	Plans, builds, runs, and monitors activities in alignment with the direction set by the Governance body to achieve the entity's objectives.
<b>Management Systems</b>	Set of interrelated or interacting elements of an organization to establish policies and objectives and processes to achieve those objectives.



<b>Material impact</b>	An impact that can reasonably have changed the decision made by a third-party in the absence of the assurance.
<b>Mutually Exclusive</b>	Two or more events that cannot happen simultaneously.
<b>National Cyber Security Agency</b>	The Agency that unifies the visions and efforts of securing the State of Qatar cyberspace and maintaining national cyber security.
<b>National Cyber Security Certification Board</b>	The board within NCSA that is empowered by taking NISCF's Certification decisions.
<b>National Information Assurance Framework</b>	The registry of cyber security laws, policies, standards, and guidelines, owned by the National Cyber Security Agency (NCSA).
<b>National Information Security Compliance Framework</b>	The umbrella under which all compliance initiatives, owned by the National Cyber Security Agency (NCSA) or other government or non-government entities, directly or indirectly, that have for primary goal to provide cyber security assurance and can have a material impact on national Qatar cyber security ecosystem, are developed and maintained.
<b>Network Firm</b>	An entity that is part of a larger structure that is under co-operation and is either controlled by the firm, or under common control, ownership or management, or part of a larger structure that has clear common objective of profit and / or sharing.
<b>NISCF's Certification Services Agreement</b>	Legally enforceable agreement signed between the applicant and the Certification Body to govern the relationship related to a NISCF's Certification Services request.



<b>NISCF's Certification Services Subject</b>	The legal entity to which the scope of the NISCF's Certification Services request is related.
<b>Normative</b>	Aspects of a standard that shall be strictly followed, implemented, and conformed to, in order to be comply with the standard.
<b>Objectivity</b>	The extent to which information is unbiased and unprejudiced.
<b>Operating Effectiveness Assessment</b>	Confirming that a control that is stated to be in place by an organization has been established and working as intended during the audit period.
<b>Operation</b>	Activities performed by the Certification Body and / or third-parties on behalf of the Certification Body to be able to decide related to NISCF Certification Services.
<b>Organ</b>	Organizational component of an organization.
<b>Organization Structure</b>	Outlines the way activities are directed by specific components of the organization to achieve the goals of an organization.
<b>Outsourced</b>	Activities and services obtained through contractual arrangements with an outside organization.
<b>Ownership</b>	Person or organization accountable for the risks related to data.
<b>Owning, Totally or Partially</b>	Holding more than 5% of the shares of an organization.
<b>Partner</b>	Organization that has contractual relationship with the Certification Body in relation to NISCF Certification Services.
<b>Period of validity</b>	The period for which a Certificate of Compliance is valid since its issuance until the next Re-Certification subject to successful maintenance.



**Persons in charge with Governance and / or Management**

The person(s) or organization(s) with the responsibility for the governance and management activities of an entity.

**Planning**

The process and documentation of preparing for NISCF Certification Services operation.

**Policy**

A formal statement of a principle (an organizational decision) that should be followed by its intended audience to achieve the stated objectives of the organization.

**Procedure**

Defines the established and / or mandatory way of performing the steps or actions defined in a process.

**Process**

Defines the series of steps or actions (including the inputs, outputs, and processing) that needs to be taken in order to achieve a particular objective.

**Publications**

Documents made publicly available, or for a limited group of individuals or organizations.

**Readiness**

State of being prepared for audit, assessment, evaluation or examination.

**Re-Certification**

Extension of the period of validity of a Certificate of Compliance for an additional period of validity.

**Record**

Physical or logical to keep information as evidence.

**Regulation**

Set of rules published by an authorized government entity that has the authority to act as a regulator for a sector or topic.

**Reinstatement**

Restoration of the full or partial restriction made during suspension on a Certificate of Compliance.





<b>Rejection</b>	The action of formally communicating to an applicant that the request received is not suitable.
<b>Request</b>	Formal written demand made by the applicant and / or other stakeholders related to a NISCF's Certification Services request through specified means toward the Certification Body and / or a third-party acting on its behalf.
<b>Responsibility</b>	Duty to perform actions as intended by the owner.
<b>Restricted</b>	Confidential information with access limited to a defined set of persons or organizations.
<b>Results</b>	The output of a process.
<b>Review</b>	Assessment by independent person(s) from the contracted Audit Accredited Service Provider of the suitability, adequacy and effectiveness of the audit operation and their results with regard to conformance of a scope.
<b>Revised</b>	Updated following occurrence of an event.
<b>Risk Management</b>	Management activities to identify, assess, protect and monitor risks.
<b>Risk Management System</b>	A system of coordinated activities to direct and control an organization with regard to risk.
<b>Safeguards</b>	Actions, individually or in combination, that are taking by the Certification Body and / or third-party organizations or individuals, trusted with the responsibility, to mitigate threats of conflict of interests based on the Risk Management System of the Certification Body.
<b>Scope</b>	The extent of boundaries of a specific NISCF Certification Services request or a NISCF Certificate of Compliance.



<b>Scope expansion</b>	Expanding the scope of a Certificate of Compliance after its issuance and while being active (Not expired, withdrawn, suspended or terminated).
<b>Scope reduction</b>	Reducing the scope of a Certificate of Compliance after its issuance and while being active (Not expired, withdrawn, suspended or terminated).
<b>Special Advisor</b>	Temporary civil servant that advises and assists the government or boards of private organizations.
<b>Special audit</b>	An audit during the NISCF's Certification Services lifecycle that is not in the initial Certification, Maintenance or Re-Certification.
<b>Stakeholders</b>	A person, group of persons or moral entity(ies) having clear interest and / or responsibility in the NISCF Services.
<b>Standard</b>	Defines the requirements that needs to be met in application of policies.
<b>Sub-contractor</b>	Use of an individual or employee of another organization individually contracted to perform specific activities.
<b>Substitute</b>	An organization that replaces another organization for the same specific activities.
<b>Sufficient and appropriate evidence</b>	Sufficiency is the measure of the quantity of evidence. Appropriateness is the measure of the quality of evidence; that is, its relevance and its reliability in providing support for, or detecting errors and exceptions related to the requirements. The quantity of evidence needed is affected by the risk of errors and exceptions expected (the greater the risk, the more evidence is likely to be required) and by the quality of such evidence (the higher the quality, the less may be required). Accordingly, the sufficiency and appropriateness of evidence are interrelated. However, merely obtaining more evidence may not compensate for its poor quality.



<b>Suspension</b>	Temporary restriction on a Certificate of Compliance for all or part of the scope.
<b>Symbol</b>	Mark, character, or graphical design used to represent a NISCF Service.
<b>Technical safeguards</b>	Hardware, software, and other technology-oriented means that limits access to NISCF Certification Services' Information.
<b>Termination</b>	Irrevocable stoppage of the validity of the Certificate of Compliance based on the Certified Organization request.
<b>Title</b>	Denomination used to identify a person, an organization, group of persons or organizations in relation to the NISCF Services.
<b>Transition</b>	The process of changing from one state to another.
<b>Types of Decisions</b>	Available options when a decision is required to be made.
<b>Valid</b>	Something that is genuine and considered as authentic and accepted.
<b>Withdrawal</b>	Revocation of Certificate of Compliance by the Certification Body.



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