



What the Consultation Publishes

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What the Consultation Publishes

Version 1.0, 28 August 2026. This assessment examines what one Home Affairs consultation package publishes, and what it directs a reader to ask for. It reads the package's three papers, the page that links them, the five hostingcertification.gov.au pages as served, and the two instruments those pages carry. Every claim rests on a Home Affairs or hostingcertification.gov.au artefact, or on an artefact already pinned in this corpus. No reporting is pinned and none is cited.

Scope

What is assessed. Twenty artefacts, retrieved on 28 August 2026 and pinned by hash. **The list below sums to twenty against the register.** One Commonwealth Cyber Security Policy Consultation Package page as served [R-HA-1]; the three consultation papers it links [R-HA-3, R-HA-7, R-HA-8]; five further Home Affairs pages [R-HA-2, R-HA-4, R-HA-5, R-HA-6, R-HA-9]; the five hostingcertification.gov.au pages as served [R-HCF-1 to R-HCF-5]; the Deed of Certification and the Hosting Certification Framework March 2021 v2 at their own addresses [R-DEED-1, R-FW-1]; two Internet Archive captures [R-IA-20260106, R-IA-20220307043937]; and two Internet Archive index files [R-IA-CDX, R-IA-CDX-DEED]. $1 + 3 + 5 + 5 + 2 + 2 + 2 = 20$. Four artefacts already pinned elsewhere in this corpus are relied on and are named where they are used: A-DEED-1, F-IA-20211126005423, A-WB-3 and L-PSPF-3.

What is not assessed. The Hosting Certification Framework 2 Policy document, which this practice has not read. Any revised Deed of Certification, which no retrieved artefact establishes exists. Any submission made to the consultation. Any departmental decision, because no retrieved artefact records one.

How the negatives are stated. Every negative below states the population it was established over in the sentence that makes it. Every count names its test. Every window states both bounds and the artefact setting each.

1 The consultation package, and what it links

The Commonwealth Cyber Security Policy Consultation Package page [R-HA-1, sha256 6a51460aaffff27fe..., retrieved 28 August 2026] states:

“This consultation package includes the: Guiding Principles to embed Zero Trust Culture. Australian Government Gateway Security Standard Consultation Paper. Hosting Certification

Framework 2 – Invitation to Consultation Paper.”

The three items are set as a list on the page; they are run together here with the list punctuation supplied.

Every content link on that page was read from its markup. Three consultation papers are linked: [consultation-paper-guiding-principles-to-embed-zero-trust-culture.pdf](#), [australian-government-gateway-security-standard-consultation-paper.pdf](#), and [invitation-to-consultation.pdf](#).

The Hosting Certification Framework 2 Policy document is not among them. Population: every <a href> in the page’s content region, 1,349,101 bytes.

2 The three papers, in their own words

The Zero Trust paper

Guiding Principles to embed Zero Trust Culture, Consultation Paper, November 2024, 11 pages [R-HA-7, sha256 6e0c5d36574d3674...]. Printed page 2:

“The purpose of this consultation paper is to engage with interested stakeholders on the “Guiding Principles to embed a Zero Trust Culture”.”

Curly quotation marks are the source’s.

The paper carries the principles it consults on. Printed page 5: “*The Commonwealth Government has five Guiding Principles to embed a Zero Trust Culture. The Guiding Principles are:*”, followed by five numbered principles. **Eleven numbered consultation questions follow at printed pages 10 and 11, nine on page 10 and two on page 11.** Printed page 9 carries the section’s lead sentence and no numbered question.

The Gateway paper

Australian Government Gateway Security Standard Consultation Paper, February 2025, 24 pages [R-HA-8, sha256 e25da5f25b60cbb2...]. Printed page 2:

“The purpose of this consultation paper is to engage with interested stakeholders on the “Australia Government Gateway Security Standard” (the Gateway Standard).”

Curly quotation marks are the source’s. The source reads “Australia Government” and not “Australian Government”; it is reproduced as written.

The paper carries the Standard’s substance, with numbered Consultation Points set through the text: “*The Gateway Standard consultation paper calls out suggested consultation points throughout the document.*” Submissions are directed to consultCCSU@homeaffairs.gov.au.

The HCF paper

Hosting Certification Framework Invitation to Consultation, July 2025, 5 pages [R-HA-3, sha256 cfa5acdd427c7711...]. Printed page 2:

“This paper invites service providers and interested stakeholders to provide written feedback on the updated HCF to the Department of Home Affairs.”

And, on the same printed page:

“Please email HCFReform@homeaffairs.gov.au for a copy of the new proposed HCF policy.”

Between that sentence and the next one quoted, the paper carries a section heading and two sentences.

Under that heading, “Submission Guidance”:

“Submissions can be provided via email at HCFReform@homeaffairs.gov.au.”

The address that supplies the policy is the address that receives submissions on it: one address in two roles, across two sections of one paper. The sentence giving the address for a copy closes the paper’s “Purpose” section; the sentence giving it for submissions sits under “Submission Guidance”.

The difference between them, counted

Neither the Zero Trust paper nor the Gateway paper contains a sentence directing a reader to request the document under consultation. Population: both documents entire, 11 pages and 24 pages. Test: substring count on the `pdftotext -layout` extraction, case-insensitive, at two widths, line-wise with whitespace collapsed to single spaces, and again with all whitespace removed. `for a copy` returns 0 and 0 in each; `request a copy` returns 0 and 0 in each.

One occurrence of upon request exists in the Gateway paper, 1 at each width, and it is not about obtaining the paper. It reads: *“Australian Government entities must also share the phase one IRAP Assessments for their Gateway/SSE Solution with Home Affairs upon request.”* That is an obligation placed on entities.

3 What the page says about who, and about when

Who

R-HA-1, under the heading “Who we want to hear from”:

“Consultation is open to all members of the public. We would particularly like to hear from: past, current and future service providers to the Australian Government; cyber security subject matter experts; and organisations that are planning or who have commenced similar cyber resilience uplift programs.”

The three categories are set as a list on the page; the semicolons are supplied here.

The same page, under “Consultation”:

“The first iteration of the Hosting Certification Framework 2 Policy document is open for public consultation.”

R-HA-3, printed page 2, states the invitation differently:

“This paper invites service providers and interested stakeholders to provide written feedback.”

Both formulations are the department’s. This assessment records both and reconciles neither.

When

R-HA-1, under “How to participate in the consultation”:

“The consultation period for the reformed Hosting Certification Framework Policy is now open. It closes on 31 July 2025.”

That sentence is unchanged across three captures. Lower bound: the Internet Archive capture of 6 January 2026 [R-IA-20260106, sha256 b38e15e5ee8f2fd8...]. Middle: the capture of 22 April 2026 [A-WB-3, sha256 24677a212ad6675c..., pinned in hosting-exemption-followon-2026-08]. Upper bound: the page as served 28 August 2026 [R-HA-1]. Test: visible-text extraction of each, markup stripped, blank lines dropped, remaining lines whitespace-collapsed, then a line-by-line comparison. **All three give 64 lines and no line differs.**

This assessment records what the page says and the window over which it said it. It does not determine the consultation’s status.

4 The publishing commitment, and the hub

R-HA-1 states where responses would appear:

“We will publish responses at the end of the consultation period on our consultation hub. There will be a consent question to confirm whether you agree to us making your response public.”

The privacy notice on the same page names it twice more:

“With your consent, we may disclose the information collected, including your response, full name and organisation details on the Consultation Hub, which will be publicly available.”

The hub is named three times on that page and linked zero times. Population: every `<a href>` in the file, 1,349,101 bytes. Test: regex over each anchor, matching “hub” case-insensitively in either the href or the anchor text. **Zero anchors.**

No address for it resolved among five tested. Population, named exhaustively: `consultations.homeaffairs.gov.au`, `haveyoursay.homeaffairs.gov.au`, `consultation.homeaffairs.gov.au` and `consult.homeaffairs.gov.au`, none of which resolves; and `homeaffairs.gov.au/consultation-hub`, which returns HTTP 404.

Two departmental index pages were read in full and neither uses the word. The consultations listing [R-HA-4, sha256 df7308887197c232...] and the How to engage us page that parents it [R-HA-9, sha256 5bc7f11fb04e0821...]. Test: case-sensitive substring count on the visible text; hub o and Hub o in each.

No response to this consultation was found published, and the method that looked for it was proved live. Home Affairs publishes submissions at /how-to-engage-us-subsite/files/<consultation>/<submitter>.pdf; this corpus pins five submissions from the CIRMP consultation at that pattern, and one of them, good-ancestors-policy.pdf, returned **HTTP 200 twice on 28 August 2026**. Population tested at that pattern: four directory names, hosting-certification-framework, hcf-reform, commonwealth-cyber-security-uplift and hosting-certification-framework-2, **all four returning HTTP 404**. And the consultations listing carries **15 consultations, none of them the HCF**; test: case-sensitive substring count on its visible text, Hosting o, HCF o, Deed of Certification o.

5 The Deed, and Phase 2

R-HA-3, printed page 5, sets out three phases. Two of them:

“Phase 1: Consultation. In July 2025, the first draft of the reformed HCF policy document will be released for consultation, inviting service providers and interested stakeholders to contribute feedback that will help shape the future direction of HCF policy development.”

“Phase 2: Deed Arrangement. The Deed of Certification will be amended to align with the revised HCF.”

The same paper names the Deed twice more, at printed page 4: *“revising the Deed of Certification as the HCF’s primary enabling instrument”* at Key Focus Area 2, and *“aligning them with the revised Deed of Certification”* at Key Focus Area 6.

No artefact in this assessment’s register describes a consultation on the Deed. Population: the twenty artefacts in the register, and no others. Test: substring count at two widths, line-wise and with all whitespace removed. **The word Deed appears in three of the twenty:** 107 times in the Deed itself [R-DEED-1], 107 times in the Internet Archive’s capture of the same Deed [R-IA-20220307043937], which is byte-identical to it, and 4 times in the Invitation [R-HA-3]. **Two of those three carriers are the same bytes under two refs.** The figure 107 is the case-sensitive count; the case-insensitive count is 112, the difference being five occurrences of lowercase deed in the Deed’s own clause 3.1.2 and execution block. **Zero occurrences in the other seventeen, named so the figure can be counted:** R-HA-1, R-HA-2, R-HA-4, R-HA-5, R-HA-6, R-HA-7, R-HA-8, R-HA-9, R-HCF-1, R-HCF-2, R-HCF-3, R-HCF-4, R-HCF-5, R-FW-1, R-IA-20260106, R-IA-CDX, R-IA-CDX-DEED. **Seventeen and three is twenty, the whole register.**

6 What already binds

The Protective Security Policy Framework Release 2026 List of Requirements, publication date 1 July 2026 [L-PSPF-3, sha256 be1eb1cece9d8096..., pinned in compellability-landscape-2026-08], carries Requirement III. Read at 200 dpi from the rendered page under convention 22:

“Security classified or systems of government significance information and data is securely hosted using a Cloud Service or Data Centre Service that has been certified against the Australian Government Hosting Certification Framework or the Australian Government Hosting Certification Framework 2.”

The same row states: TECH; 15. Cyber Security Programs; applies to **All entities**; date **1/07/2026**; status **Modify**; type **Performance**; **Mandatory**; **Scored**.

No string count over the text extraction is available at any width. pdftotext -layout interleaves **eight cells** of the row’s own metadata into the middle of the sentence, so the phrase is not contiguous at any width the extraction offers. The eight, in the order the extraction gives them: TECH; 15. Cyber Security Programs; All entities; 1/07/2026; Modify; Performance; Mandatory; Scored. The extraction reads:

“...certified against the Australian Government Hosting Certification Framework or the Australian Government Hosting **TECH 15. Cyber Security Programs All entities 1/07/2026 Modify Performance Mandatory Scored** Certification Framework 2.”

Emphasis added to mark the interleaved cells. The reading above rests on the image and states that width. The abbreviation HCF returns 0 over the same extraction at both widths, a figure that is available because no column splits it.

7 What has not changed

The Hosting Certification Framework March 2021 v2 served today is byte-identical to its Internet Archive capture of 26 November 2021. Both hash to 7b654f6e435bb90560701bf5e4905538f2da0cae73157ab4d58e710045855070. Lower bound: F-IA-20211126005423, pinned in general-findings/hcf-framework-availability-2026-08. Upper bound: R-FW-1, fetched HTTP 200 on 28 August 2026.

The Deed of Certification served today is byte-identical to its Internet Archive capture of 7 March 2022. Both hash to 3b7f03819a27aae5550b8ce5a434bea2e29b36806d44729d4cd25e79dd101a2f. Lower bound: R-IA-20220307043937, the raw id_ replay of capture 20220307043937. Upper bound: R-DEED-1, fetched HTTP 200 on 28 August 2026. The replay is confirmed to have returned the captured bytes rather than a live re-fetch: the file’s own base32 SHA-1 is TBQC5V6L7NM4P572JAD667EJQIHBH5SB, reproducing the digest the index records for that timestamp.

The earliest capture establishes availability from 7 March 2022 and does not establish when the document was first published. The PDF's own CreationDate of 8 October 2021 and the 2021-11/ segment of its address are not captures and establish nothing about whether the file could be retrieved on any date.

The five hostingcertification.gov.au pages as served carry the same notice, character for character [R-HCF-1 to R-HCF-5]. Test: the notice below was taken from R-HCF-1 and matched as an exact substring against the visible text of each of the five, after markup was stripped and whitespace collapsed to single spaces; it matched in all five.

“The Hosting Certification Framework is currently undergoing reform. The Department will pause the HCF Certification registration of prospective service providers and HCF Certified providers seeking supplementary assessment effective from 3 November 2025 until HCF reforms have been completed.”

None of those five pages contains the word Deed. Population: the five pages entire. Test: substring count at two widths.

8 The finding

Each element below is stated with the artefact that carries it and the date it bears. They are listed, not combined. No sentence here asserts that they compose into anything, and none should be read as doing so.

One. Of the three papers the package puts to consultation, two contain the document under consultation and one directs the reader to email for a copy. R-HA-7 and R-HA-8 carry the Guiding Principles and the Gateway Standard respectively; R-HA-3, dated July 2025, carries the sentence *“Please email HCFReform@homeaffairs.gov.au for a copy of the new proposed HCF policy.”*

Two. The address that supplies that policy is the address that receives submissions on it. R-HA-3, printed page 2, July 2025.

Three. The page states consultation is open to all members of the public; the paper states it invites service providers and interested stakeholders. R-HA-1 as served 28 August 2026; R-HA-3, July 2025.

Four. The page served on 28 August 2026 states the consultation is now open and closes on 31 July 2025. The sentence is present and character-for-character identical in three artefacts: the Internet Archive capture of 6 January 2026 [R-IA-20260106, sha256 b38e15e5ee8f2fd8...], the capture of 22 April 2026 [A-WB-3, sha256 24677a212ad6675c...], and the page as served 28 August 2026 [R-HA-1, sha256 6a51460aaffff27fe...].

Five. The page commits to publishing responses on a consultation hub. It names the hub three times and links it zero times, no address for it resolved among five tested, and no response was found at the pattern by

which this department publishes submissions, a pattern proved live the same day by a CIRMP submission returning HTTP 200. R-HA-1, R-HA-4 and R-HA-9, all as served 28 August 2026.

Six. The Deed of Certification is named in the Invitation as a Phase 2 amendment, after the Phase 1 consultation. No artefact in this assessment's register of twenty describes a consultation on the Deed. R-HA-3, July 2025.

Seven. Requirement III of the PSPF Release 2026 List of Requirements names the Australian Government Hosting Certification Framework 2, and is Mandatory, Scored, and applies to All entities from 1/07/2026. L-PSPF-3, publication date 1 July 2026.

Eight. The Deed and the framework document served today are byte-identical to captures of 7 March 2022 and 26 November 2021 respectively. R-IA-20220307043937 and R-DEED-1; F-IA-20211126005423 and R-FW-1.

Nine, and it is a fact about the Internet Archive and not about the department. The Deed's address carries 4 index rows [R-IA-CDX-DEED, sha256 2f6bab3ece5c3f26...]; the framework document's address, in the same 2021-11/ directory, carries 23 [F-IA-CDX, sha256 e280383aa4782e9f..., pinned in general-findings/hcf-framework-availability-2026-08]. Test for both: a CDX query with no collapse, counted as returned; of those, 3 and 10 respectively carry statuscode 200. The Deed's index carries one distinct digest and no zero-byte digest; the framework's carries two distinct digests, the second being the zero-byte digest on four rows. Spans: 7 March 2022 to 26 August 2026, and 26 November 2021 to 19 August 2026. **What a third-party crawler visited is determined by the crawler. Nothing here establishes that the two files were differently linked, differently served, or differently treated.**

Limitations

The department's site-wide search returns HTTP 404 and could not be used. No negative in this assessment rests on searching the department's own index.

Seven URLs were submitted to the Internet Archive's save endpoint on 28 August 2026. Three were captured and four were not. Three plus four is seven.

Captured, three: hostingcertification.gov.au/ at 20260828072939, /framework at 20260828073723, /service-providers at 20260828073756.

Outstanding, four: the consultation package page, the Invitation PDF, /resources and /certified-service-providers.

The two Home Affairs artefacts this assessment most rests on are among the four, so neither has a third-party capture at this date.

The Internet Archive was intermittently degraded during retrieval. Within one session its CDX endpoint served an "Internet Archive services are temporarily offline" page and later answered 200, and its

save endpoint returned 200, 429 and 520. Any archive-based negative here was taken against a service in that state.

A consultation hub under a name none of the five tested addresses reached is not excluded.

The Hosting Certification Framework 2 Policy document has not been read.

Whether any submission was made, and by whom, is unestablished.

Both unchanged windows at section 7 rest on sampled captures, not on continuous observation, and the two samples differ in size. Section 7 makes the same kind of claim about each document, a two-point comparison between one capture and the fetch of 28 August 2026, so the limitation applies to both.

The Deed's sample: 4 index rows, 3 of them at statuscode 200, spanning 7 March 2022 to 26 August 2026 [R-IA-CDX-DEED, sha256 2f6bab3ece5c3f26...].

The framework's sample: 23 index rows, 10 of them at statuscode 200, spanning 26 November 2021 to 19 August 2026 [F-IA-CDX, sha256 e280383aa4782e9f..., pinned in general-findings/hcf-framework-availability-2026-08].

A change made and reverted between two captures would not appear on either address.

Requirement III's reading rests on an image, because no string count over the text extraction is available at any width.

What this assessment is not

It is not a finding that the department withheld anything. A document supplied on request from a published address is available. R-HA-3 gives the address and the instruction, and a reader who follows them obtains the policy. This assessment records a difference in form between three papers in one package and does not characterise it.

It is not a finding that any decision was wrong. No retrieved artefact records a decision, so none is assessed.

It is not a finding about the revised Deed. Nothing establishes that one exists. Every statement about the Deed here concerns the current Deed at its address, and what R-HA-3 says will happen at Phase 2.

It is not a check on reporting. No reporting is pinned or cited. Where this assessment states that a proposition is carried by no retrieved artefact, that is a statement about the artefacts retrieved and not a statement that the proposition is false.

It is not a finding that the three papers should have been uniform. They differ from one another in more than one respect, including that only two of the three name a submission address on their face. This assessment records the one difference that bears on whether the document under consultation is readable, and does not assert that uniformity was owed.

Every negative is bounded by the artefacts retrieved on 28 August 2026 and by the search width stated beside it.

The consultation's status is not determined. The page says open and gives a past date. Both are printed above and neither is resolved.

Related published assessments

- **AOS-HCF-2026-001**, *Jurisdiction of Control in the Hosting Certification Framework, Strategic Tier*. The certified-provider register read at the Strategic tier.
 - **AOS-CS0-2026-001**, *What the Certification Is Over*. What the framework's published instruments say the Certified Strategic certification is over.
 - **AOS-RCH-2026-001**, *What the Record Can Show*. The Relevant Change mechanism, and what the published instruments require to be published.
 - **AOS-HCE-2026-001**, *The Hosting Certification Exemption*. Section 30AB(4) of the *Security of Critical Infrastructure Act 2018*.
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End of document.