



Tech Standards Security Clearance Program

Guidelines

About the program

The Department of Industry, Science and Resources sponsors and funds Australian Government security clearances for participants involved in international technical standards setting in critical technologies.

This is part of an Australian Government initiative to:

- support industry-led, consensus-based approaches to developing standards
- increase Australia's influence in the design and use of technology standards globally
- ensure that critical technologies evolve in ways that align with our national interests and values.

The program will give Australian experts access to security classified information. This will support their involvement in developing international technical standards for critical technologies and promote greater engagement between industry and government.

Important information

A person who holds an Australian Government security clearance has important legal responsibilities. They are subject to laws about disclosing Commonwealth information, and associated penalties. These include sections of the *Crimes Act 1914* and the *Criminal Code Act 1995*.

Decisions to apply for a security clearance should not be taken lightly. The security clearance process involves an initial investigation which is thorough and intrusive. The process can take many months to complete. Our department provides no commitment to timelines for any aspect of the assessment, screening and security clearance processes.

If the Australian Government Security Vetting Agency (**AGSVA**) grants you a security clearance, we may contact you to provide briefings at appropriate times. We will liaise with you on the method and logistics of briefing. If you hold a clearance, this doesn't guarantee access to information. The owners of the information will determine if a person needs to receive security classified information.

Our department will typically fund Negative Vetting 1 (**NV1**) level clearances, which are valid for 10 years. We have funding until June 2026 to provide security clearances. We will only sponsor and fund one security clearance or renewal, not subsequent renewals.

There are ongoing reporting requirements for clearance holders and lifelong obligations to protect information received under this program.

Our sponsorship of the security clearance will stop if you:

- no longer sit on a relevant committee
- become ineligible to hold a clearance for any other reason.

The List of Critical Technologies in the National Interest

Critical technologies are current and emerging technologies with the capacity to significantly enhance or pose risk to Australia's national interest, including our:

- economic prosperity
- national security
- social cohesion.

In 2023, the Australian Government released its [Critical Technologies Statement](#) and updated [List of Critical Technologies in the National Interest](#). The list of technologies identifies technology fields that will have a high impact on Australia's national interests and are aligned with government priorities or strategic needs. The list intends to guide future policy decision making.

The 7 key enabling technology fields are:

- advanced manufacturing and materials technologies
- artificial intelligence **(AI)** technologies
- advanced information and communication technologies
- quantum technologies
- autonomous systems, robotics, positioning, timing and sensing
- biotechnologies
- clean energy generation and storage technologies.

Role of international technical standards

Standards are voluntary specifications, procedures and guidelines that shape the development of new technologies. International technical standards:

- ensure that technology products, services and systems are safe, consistent, trusted and reliable
- make trade easier
- open up new markets for Australian products and services that meet these standards.

The Australian Government wants international standards for critical technologies to reflect Australia's values, innovations and expertise.

Eligibility criteria

We will assess eligibility for the security clearance program via the following criteria:

- Australian based individuals participating in a Standards Development Organisation **(SDO)** committee (or equivalent) that is actively engaged in setting international technical standards in at least one of the 7 critical technology fields in the [List of Critical Technologies in the National Interest](#).
- Applicants must provide a business case demonstrating this participation in their application.
- Applicants must be Australian citizens.
- Applicants must be aware of and agree to their ongoing obligations as a clearance holder, as outlined in this document.

Assessment criteria

The department will have full discretion to decide whether to approve an application based on an assessment of the applicant's field of expertise, involvement in standardisation activities and any other relevant factors.

Participation in this program is based on:

- assessment by the department that there is a need for a security clearance
- program funding availability
- individual eligibility as outlined above
- a priority scale:
 - **priority level 1** - committee chairperson and international representative
 - **priority level 2** – any other committee member.

Application and assessment process

1. Application to join the program

Submit your application via our online form.

2. Eligibility review

We will review your application against the assessment criteria and will notify you of the status of your application.

Screening and clearance process

1. Preliminary screening

If your application is approved, our department's Personnel Security Team (**PST**) will then liaise with you on preliminary screening, via our online portal. We require the following information and forms at this stage:

Nationally Coordinated Criminal History Check – Application and informed consent form. This form requires you to submit a minimum of 4 certified identity documents.

Pre-Employment Suitability Assessment (PESA) pack comprising:

- Security Questionnaire (Online form)
- Completed Official Secrets Acknowledgement
- Security Clearance Privacy Statement
- Completed Privacy Consent Form.

2. Outcome of preliminary screening and progression to security clearance process

PST will inform you of the outcome of the preliminary screening process. If successful, you will progress to the Australian Government Security Vetting Agency (**AGSVA**) security clearance process. AGSVA will contact applicants with instructions and next steps.

3. Security clearance process

We anticipate most clearances granted will be to NV1 level, but other clearance levels may be considered as well.

AGSVA will assess an applicant’s **eligibility** and **suitability** for holding a security clearance.

To be **eligible** for an Australian Government security clearance, an individual must meet the following requirements:

- Australian citizenship
- checkable background.

The purpose of the security vetting process is to determine whether an individual is **suitable** to hold a security clearance. This means if they have and demonstrate an appropriate level of integrity. In the security context, integrity is defined as a range of character traits that indicate the individual is able to protect Australian Government information. These character traits are honesty, trustworthiness, maturity, tolerance, resilience and loyalty.

4. Personnel security checks

AGSVA conducts the following external checks as part of the vetting assessment process:

Check	Baseline	NV1	NV2	PV
Verification of Identity	✓	✓	✓	✓
Confirmation of Australian citizenship and status of any other citizenships	✓	✓	✓	✓
Background check	5 years	10 years	10 years	Greater of 10 years or from the age of 16
Referee checks	✓	✓	✓	✓
Digital footprint check	✓	✓	✓	✓
National police check	✓ No exclusion	✓ Full exclusion	✓ Full exclusion	✓ Full exclusion
Financial history check	✓	✓	✓	✓
Financial statement	*	✓	✓	✓ Supporting documents required
Financial probity check	*	*	*	✓
ASIO assessment	*	✓	✓	✓
Security interview	*	*	✓	✓
Psychological assessment	*	*	*	✓
Mandatory ✓ If required by AGSVA *				

AGSVA may ask for additional information or undertake additional checks and interviews during the vetting assessment process. They do this to resolve a security clearance decision in the interest of national security, if needed.

5. Assessment and decision

An AGSVA vetting analyst will conduct a security clearance assessment and make a recommendation on your suitability to hold a security clearance. An officer with the appropriate delegate authority will then grant or deny an Australian Government security clearance. AGSVA will inform you of the outcome of the assessment.

The assessment needs to establish confidence that you possess a sound and stable character, and that you are not unduly vulnerable to influence or coercion. The Protective Security Policy Framework requires that any doubt regarding an person's suitability to hold a security clearance be resolved in the national interest.

Once you receive a security clearance

Our department will maintain a list of people to whom we have granted security clearances.

You must inform our department when you stop participating on a relevant committee. When your clearance stops, we may need to brief you and/or ask you to sign relevant declaration of secrecy forms.

If you hold a security clearance you must pre-notify us of all personal and work-related international travel you take, including dates and locations. A Communication Intelligence Security Officer (**COMSO**) from our department may be in touch to brief or advise you about this travel. When you return, you must notify AGSVA of your change of circumstances via their [myClearance portal](#).

You must also report other changes in personal circumstances to AGSVA. Read [more about these requirements on the AGSVA website](#).

Our department or AGSVA will provide you with more information about these reporting requirements throughout the security clearance application process.

More information

Please contact us at criticaltechnologystandards@industry.gov.au with any questions.

We may amend or update these guidelines from time to time. AGSVA may also amend or update their security clearance processes from time to time. If there is discrepancy between this document and the requirements of the department's preliminary screening and/or AGSVA processes, please follow the department's preliminary screening and/or AGSVA processes.

Please refer to our website for the latest guidelines: industry.gov.au/critical-technology-standards

Please refer to the AGSVA website for information on the security clearance process generally: defence.gov.au/security/clearances/about/vetting-assessment