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CSA Kicks Off Licensing Framework for Cybersecurity Service Providers

Press Releases

## CSA Kicks Off Licensing Framework for Cybersecurity Service Providers

11 April 2022

CSA launched a licensing framework for penetration testing and managed SOC monitoring providers. Administered by the new Cybersecurity Services Regulation Office (CSRO), the regime protects consumers by ensuring high provider standards. Firms had until October 2022 to apply for licenses, with fees set at \$500 for individuals and \$1,000 for businesses to ensure digital accountability.

### ***New Cybersecurity Services Regulation Office Set Up to Administer Framework***

1 The Cyber Security Agency of Singapore (CSA) has announced the launch of its licensing framework for cybersecurity service providers under Part 5 of the Cybersecurity Act (CS Act). The licensing framework will take effect from 11 April 2022. Part 5 of the CS Act and the Second Schedule to the CS Act will both come into force on the same day.

### **Background on the licensing framework**

2 The intent of the framework is to better safeguard consumers' interests and address the information asymmetry between consumers and cybersecurity service providers. At the same time, the regulatory regime is also envisaged to improve service providers' standards and standing over time. For a start, CSA will license two types of cybersecurity service providers, namely those providing penetration testing and managed security operations centre monitoring services<sup>[1]</sup>. These two services are prioritised because service providers performing such services can have significant access into their clients' computer systems and sensitive information. In the event that the access is abused, the client's operations could be disrupted. In addition, these services are already widely available and adopted in the market, and hence have the potential to cause significant impact on the overall cybersecurity landscape.

3 CSA sought industry feedback on the proposed licence conditions and draft subsidiary legislation through a 4-week consultation process from 20 September to 18 October 2021. A total of 29 responses were received from a mix of local and foreign industry players, industry associations, as well as members of the public. The feedback was considered and taken into account when finalising the licensing framework. More details on the feedback received and the resulting key revisions made to the licensing framework can be found in the industry consultation closing note (attached as [Annex A](#)) on CSA's website at [www.csa.gov.sg](http://www.csa.gov.sg).

4 Under the new framework, which is stipulated under section 49 of the CS Act, existing cybersecurity service providers who are already engaged in the businesses of providing either or both licensable cybersecurity services will be given six months (i.e. by 11 October 2022) to apply for a licence. Cybersecurity service providers who do not apply for a licence in time will have to cease the provision of licensable cybersecurity service until a licence is obtained. Any person who engages in the business of providing any licensable cybersecurity services to another person without a licence after 11 October

2022 shall be guilty of an offence and liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding \$50,000 or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 2 years or to both. However, a cybersecurity service provider who applies for a licence by 11 October 2022 may continue to provide its service until a decision on their licence application has been made.

5 The licence is valid for a period of 2 years and the licence fees for individuals and businesses are \$500 and \$1000 respectively. A one-time 50% waiver of the licence fees will be granted for all licence applications that are lodged within the first 12 months i.e. before 11 Apr 2023 to support businesses due to the impact of COVID-19.

### **New Cybersecurity Services Regulation Office**

6 CSA has set up the Cybersecurity Services Regulation Office (CSRO) to administer the licensing framework and facilitate liaisons with the industry and wider public on all licensing-related matters. The functions of the CSRO include:

- Enforcing the licensing framework, for example managing licensing processes, imposing and enforcing licence conditions;
- Responding to queries and feedback from licensees, businesses and public; and
- Developing and sharing resources on licensable cybersecurity services with consumers such as the list of licensees.

7 Further information on the licensing framework and CSRO is available at <https://www.csro.gov.sg>. Queries on the framework may be sent to CSRO at [contact@csro.gov.sg](mailto:contact@csro.gov.sg).

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*[Annex A: Closing Note to Industry Consultation on the Licensing Framework for Cybersecurity Service Providers](#)*

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[1] This includes companies or individuals who are directly engaged for such services, third-party vendors that support such companies, as well as resellers of the licensable cybersecurity services.

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### **About the Cyber Security Agency of Singapore**

Established in 2015, the Cyber Security Agency of Singapore (CSA) seeks to keep Singapore's cyberspace safe and secure to underpin our Nation Security, power a Digital Economy and protect our Digital Way of Life. It maintains an oversight of national cybersecurity functions and works with sector leads to protect Singapore's Critical Information Infrastructure. CSA also engages with various stakeholders to heighten cyber security awareness, build a vibrant cybersecurity ecosystem supported by a robust workforce, pursue international partnerships and drive regional cybersecurity capacity building programmes.

CSA is part of the Prime Minister's Office and is managed by the Ministry of Communications and Information. For more news and information, please visit [www.csa.gov.sg](http://www.csa.gov.sg).

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