

National Information Assurance Partnership
Common Criteria Evaluation and Validation Scheme



The Relationship of NIAP Archived Products to CNSSP-11

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With cyber threats growing exponentially, it is increasingly important for industry and the U.S. Government to acquire information technology products that can be trusted to help combat these threats. System administrators, network architects and procurement departments need to have assurance that the products they deploy perform the required security functions as designed and as intended within their networks.

In the past, Information Assurance (IA) and IA-enabled IT product manufacturers were able to submit devices to NIAP for evaluation against a Security Target, or, when one existed, against a Protection Profile (PP) for that type of device. Products that were successfully evaluated were then listed on NIAP's Validated Product List, which provided end-users with the assurance that the devices met the requirements specified in CNSS Policy #11 for National Security System Procurement.

Based on the knowledge gained from over a decade of these evaluations, NIAP and the 26 nations in the Common Criteria Recognition Arrangement have adopted an improved methodology intended to provide:

- Comparable, consistent evaluation results based on an agreed upon threat model and set of security functional requirements.
- Testable, repeatable, achievable evaluation results based on objective test activities for each security requirement.
- Protection Profiles collaboratively developed with industry, academia, and other Common Criteria Schemes, defined as a Technical Community.
- Mutual recognition of IT product security certification among all member nations supported by evaluations conducted by authorized independent labs that test products against technology-based security requirements articulated in PPs.

The new PP based approach to Common Criteria evaluation has been internationally accepted and provides better predictability, greater speed, less cost and a wider U.S. and international market for evaluated products and emerging technologies. ***Common Criteria ultimately serves the end users who may purchase and deploy commercial IT products with greater confidence.***

As a result of these changes, all products evaluated and validated by NIAP with Evaluation Assurance Level (EAL) certificates will be migrated to the NIAP Archived Products List, according to NIAP Policy #21, "NIAP Evaluated Product Assurance Maintenance – Products with Evaluation Assurance Level Claims". NIAP will now only accept products for evaluation claiming exact compliance with one or more published NIAP-approved PPs (note: EAL-based evaluations have not been conducted in NIAP for over two years). EALs and Robustness Levels are no longer specified in NIAP evaluations.

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Although a wide variety of PPs have been and will continue to be developed and published on the NIAP website, PPs do not exist for all Commercial-Off-The-Shelf (COTS) technologies. Per CNSSP-11, NIAP shall collaborate with U.S. Government Departments and Agencies and industry to prioritize the development of new PPs for additional COTS IA and IA-enabled IT products. Products that were previously evaluated and approved by NIAP, but have now been moved to the archived products list, no longer satisfy CNSSP-11 for NSS procurement. However, archived products may continue to be used if already deployed within an organization's IT infrastructure. For product types that do not have a PP, NIAP will provide interim guidance, according to the published NIAP "Guidelines for When No PP Exists" document.

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