THE DEPARTMENT OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS

Te Tari Taiwhenua

Information for the State Sector

What is the Evidence of Identity Standard?

The Evidence of Identity (EOI) Standard is a good practice guide for government agencies that need to establish the identity of clients accessing their services. It only applies to those services that have a degree of identity-related risk.

Who should be using the Evidence of Identity Standard?

The Standard has been developed specifically for use by New Zealand government agencies. Agencies will be required to apply this Standard to all services delivered to the public that contain identity-related risk. The Standard applies to both online and offline services provided by agencies.

Over time, the Standard will become mandatory and agencies will be required to apply it when developing new services or undertaking process redesign of existing services.

Why has it been introduced?

The Standard is part of the suite of New Zealand Authentication Standards for online service delivery. These have been designed to assist agencies to meet the Networked State Services Development Goal (operation of government transformed through use of the internet by June 2010).

The Evidence of Identity Standard applies to both online and offline services and will help ensure government agencies apply consistent, good practice methods when establishing the identity of individuals with whom they transact.

It is vital that the state sector maintains a high level of integrity **and** that only people entitled to government services receive them. The Evidence of Identity Standard will help ensure that agencies follow the consistent good practice processes to identify that clients are who they say they are.

It is very important that the correct level of evidence of identity is collected for the appropriate service. This is because:

- If agencies collect **too much** identity related information this may be inconsistent with New Zealand's privacy requirements.
- If agencies collect **too little** identity related information then the agency might not achieve its business objectives; the public's confidence in the ability of the agency might be eroded and identity theft might occur, which could lead to entitlement fraud.

The Standard will ensure consistency in the purposes for which particular documentation should, and should not, be used within an evidence of identity process.

How is the Standard used?

The focus of the Standard is on an agency's initial contact with an individual accessing a service or services. It does not apply to reconfirming that individual's identity during subsequent contacts with the agency in relation to that service.

There are three components to establishing an individual's identity. The Evidence of Identity Standard maintains that for moderate to high-risk services all three components must be verified before being confident that an individual is the true owner of the claimed identity.

1. Is the identity valid? **Was that person born? Are they still alive?**

2. Does the presenter have links to the identity? **Are they who they say they are?**

3. Does the presenter use the identity? **Is this how they're known in the community?**

The Standard takes an agency through the process to establish the level of identity-related risk in the service, or services, they provide. This is undertaken through a risk assessment. The results of the risk assessment will enable an agency to determine how the three components for establishing identity can best be met.

Where can I get additional guidance?

The Department of Internal Affairs (DIA), as Custodian of the Evidence of Identity Standard, is the contact point for queries about the Standard. The EOI Standard Custodian can be contacted via email: **eoistandard@dia.govt.nz**