



# CHANGING THE MINDSET ON CYBERSECURITY & COMPLIANCE

Organizational security and policy compliance is by no means fun, often requiring teams to produce hundreds of pages of artifacts for each system, then continuously repeat the process.

There have been several efforts over the years to shrink the time to compliance and authorization with process models, tools, and techniques, but they have not significantly reduced the cost and time to achieve compliance. As the nation continues to face existential cybersecurity threats, the need for organizations to secure sensitive information is a strategic priority. In June of 2021, the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) released the **Open Security Controls Assessment Language (OSCAL)**. OSCAL is a standardized, data-centric framework for the documentation and coordination of information required to meet many current compliance frameworks.

## What To Know About OSCAL

With organizations moving more business operations and data to cloud services providers, meeting regulatory compliance is becoming increasingly complex and expensive. For public sector organizations, managing compliance across hundreds of information systems requires skilled labor and deep expertise in cybersecurity and privacy in to support ongoing assessments within a constantly changing threat landscape.

OSCAL introduces a standardized approach for management of compliance activities with a new, machine-readable language for communicating security and privacy controls. By

doing this, security authorization and assessment activity has been organized into structured data that describes the behavior of a system. By adopting OSCAL, organizations can begin to:

- + Promote a secure-by-design culture by decentralizing the creation of security control and documentation to developers and engineers
- + Assess compliance control implementations across multiple information systems and components
- + Support multiple regulatory frameworks simultaneously
- + Automate the generation of compliance documentation
- + Automate processes and human-driven activities like security plan validation
- + Support continuous authorizations by decreasing assessment-related labor and automation of continuous monitoring capabilities
- + Bridge legacy and emerging processes by converting from OSCAL to familiar formats like Word or Excel

## Starting Your OSCAL Journey

Organizations looking to accelerate compliance can take advantage of OSCAL today by shifting-left compliance activities earlier in their Software Development Lifecycle (SDLC) process and by supporting the creation of OSCAL artifacts.

To facilitate that journey, Easy Dynamics has developed an OSCAL Adoption Framework that recommends a comprehensive 6-step process, from identifying a candidate compliance system to educational and change management efforts, resulting in the digital transformation of an organization's ability to develop and maintain highly reusable compliance artifacts. Our framework also leverages

our open-source projects that accelerate adoption of OSCAL and facilitates simplified engagement of non-technical team members into the shift-left compliance workflow.



### Leveraging The Benefits of OSCAL

The organizations that will benefit most from the OSCAL framework are those that are already thinking about security while their systems are being built. The framework itself is designed to adapt compliance management into smaller reusable components familiar to modern software design methodologies. By creating a secure-by-design approach to compliance, architects and engineers are encouraged to consider how security and privacy controls are embedded into each component, how they should be assessed, and how to ensure that active compliance, or continuous authorizations, is more readily achieved. By making it a machine-readable framework, the system can embed this thinking into these reusable components, increasing speed to value and reducing costs from refactoring for security after completing the initial design.

This approach is designed by NIST to provide continuous assessment of security compliance at the component level which reduces the amount of custom work, time to create unique compliance documentation, and time to detect and respond to changes in operations that could result in a security weakness. The result is a system which is more secure, resilient and cost effective.

### We Can Help Chart Your Path

Since we first opened our doors, Easy Dynamics has been helping clients adapt to change, and OSCAL is no exception.

We've been actively partnering with NIST and the Federal Government to develop this critical technology. By making our tools open source, we're demonstrating our commitment to both the technology and the success of government to reduce cost and increase security using OSCAL. Our subject matter experts can also help you chart a successful path – this technology will be an important achievement in creating more secure, resilient, and cost-effective infrastructure not only for the Federal Government, but for your organization as well.

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Why choose Easy Dynamics? Because we're leading the way with our next-generation technology solutions.

Easy Dynamics is an east coast company with a west coast attitude, driven by a unique blend of talent, innovation, and engineering excellence. Since 2006, we've been at the forefront of developing technology-driven initiatives within the federal government, leveraging our expertise to advance its varied missions with maximum agility and value.

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