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ITL PUBLISHES SECURITY AND PRIVACY CONTROLS FOR FEDERAL AGENCIES

The selection and implementation of *security and privacy controls* for information systems and organizations are important tasks that can have major implications on the operations and assets of organizations as well as the welfare of individuals and the Nation. Security and privacy controls are the safeguards and countermeasures prescribed for information systems or organizations that are designed to protect the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of information that is processed, stored, and transmitted by those systems and organizations. Controls are also designed to satisfy a set of defined security requirements.

On April 30, 2013, ITL published NIST Special Publication (SP) 800-53, Revision 4, *Security and Privacy Controls for Federal Information Systems and Organizations.* The publication was developed by the *Joint Task Force Transformation Initiative* Interagency Working Group with representatives from the Civil, Defense, and Intelligence Communities in an ongoing effort to produce a unified information security framework for the federal government. The innovative document provides a catalog of security and privacy controls for federal information systems and organizations. It describes a process for selecting controls to protect organizational operations (including mission, functions, image, and reputation), organizational assets, individuals, other organizations, and the Nation from a diverse set of threats including hostile cyber attacks, natural disasters, structural failures, and human errors.

The controls in the catalog address a diverse set of security and privacy requirements across the federal government and critical infrastructure, derived from legislation, Executive Orders, policies, directives, regulations, standards, and mission and business needs. Implemented as part of an organization-wide risk management process, the controls are customizable so that agencies can develop a security and privacy framework that best fits their specific requirements. The security and privacy controls in SP 800-53, Revision 4, have been designed to be largely policy- and technology-neutral to facilitate flexibility in implementation. The publication also describes how to develop specialized sets of controls, or overlays, tailored for specific types of missions and business functions, technologies, or environments of operation.

Finally, the catalog of security controls addresses security from both a functionality perspective (the strength of security functions and mechanisms provided) and an assurance perspective (the measures of confidence in the implemented security capability). Addressing both security functionality and security assurance ensures that information technology products and the information systems built from those products are sufficiently trustworthy.