



Gillespie becomes certified auditor for HMG IA Standard 6

By [Brian Sims](#)
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Mike Gillespie – the director of information assurance at Advent IM – has become one of the UK's first certified auditors for the Government's new Information Assurance Standard No6 (IAS6): 'Handling Personal Data and Managing Information Risk'.



IAS6 applies to central Government departments, agencies, their suppliers and service providers who, between now and 15 June – are mandated to submit a statement of compliance to the new Standard as part of their annual Statements of Internal Control (SiC).

Gillespie is one of the few CESG (the National Technology Authority for Information Assurance) Listed Advisor Scheme (CLAS) consultants in the UK, trained to audit IAS6 compliance and assist senior information risk owners to collect evidence across the delivery chain for use in their Information Risk Reports (as required by the Cabinet Office).

CLAS consultants are approved to provide information assurance advice on systems processing protectively marked information up to – and including – SECRET.

CESG and Cabinet Office in unison

IAS6 and its supporting methodology Good Practice Guide 15 (GPG 15) have been jointly developed by the CESG and the Cabinet Office, and provide guidance on the protection of personal data and managing information risk.

The Standard supports the Government's new Security Policy Framework, specifically Mandatory Requirement 14 (which requires departments and agencies to follow procedures for handling and protecting citizen or personal data), and the recent Data Handling Review.

Figures quoted in February this year by the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) state that, since the security breach at HM Revenue and Customs last year, companies and Government bodies have reported a significant increase in the number of data breaches. The ICO reported 99 incidents in the public and private sector in the three months occurring since November 2008, compared to 277 breaches in the whole of the previous 12 months – further justifying the need for such a standard and adherence to it.

Tighter regulations on data holders

IAS6 is one of several initiatives planned by central Government, which will include tighter regulations on data holders and data processors (as defined in the Data Protection Act). The Information Commissioners' Office has also been afforded significantly increased powers to investigate and prosecute.

Speaking about the news, Gillespie told SMT Online: "Government data breaches occur on a worryingly frequent basis. Many departments are failing to comply with legislation such as the Data Protection Act, often paying little more than lip service to the statutory obligations the act imposes for the protection of personal data. Some often lose sight of the fact that, just because they hold personal data, that data still remains the property of the individual."

In conclusion, Gillespie stated: "IAS6 will help departments, agencies and suppliers become accountable for personal data and implement risk-mediated controls to prevent security breaches."

As well as being a CLAS consultant and trained IAS6 auditor, Gillespie has extensive experience in delivering Best Practice information security management services to central Government departments and agencies, and their suppliers and service providers.

He's also an experienced lead auditor for the International Standard for Information Security Management (ISO 27001/BS 7799) which underpins the majority of Her Majesty's Government's guidance.

Standard IA6 and the Good Practice Guide 15 (GPG 15) are published by the Communications Electronics Security Group (CESG), part of GCHQ. More information on Standard IA6 can be found at the CESG web site. Check out the link provided on the right hand panel of this page.

Everything you need to know about... Advent IM

Advent IM is an independent specialist consultancy focusing on 'protective security' management solutions for information, people and physical assets across both the public and private sectors.

Established in 2002, the company is a Centre of Excellence for protective security services, promoting the benefits of Best Practice guidelines and standards and the need to address risk management in order to protect against potential threats.

From offices in London and the Midlands, the company's consultants work nationwide and boast over 100 years' industry experience between them.

Those consultants are members of the Institute of Information Security Professionals and The Security Institute. Advent IM is a subscriber to the CESG Listed Advisor Scheme, a member of the Business Continuity Institute and British Computer Society – The Information Security Specialist Group (ISSG) Forum, and part of the Associate Consultant Programme for the British Standards Institution.