Evaluation of Platform-Dependent Products
Interim Guidance

As stated in the _Position Statement Regarding the CC Evaluation of General Purpose Operating Systems_, progress is being made in developing a sensible strategy to address Common Criteria evaluation of underlying platforms such as operating systems. Currently, there are several NIAP PPs in which the Target of Evaluation (TOE) contains security functionality that falls outside the scope of evaluation. This is typically denoted by the SFR allowing a selection of "TOE Platform" or "TOE Environment", with associated assurance activities that make the assumption that the TOE Platform or TOE Environment is itself evaluated. In these PPs, the underlying platform typically provides some of the required security functionality. This underlying platform may be an operating system or other runtime environment.

This paper outlines an interim approach that allows for evaluation of products that rely on an underlying platform until a published operating system evaluation strategy is defined. **This approach does not apply to products that rely on evaluation of underlying mobile operating systems, as the Mobile Device Fundamentals PP provides a method for evaluation of that technology.**

In cases where the TOE Platform or Environment provides the security functionality specified by the SFR, evidence that the TOE Platform or Environment provides that functionality must be provided to the evaluators. If the underlying platform is not evaluated, it is acceptable for the evaluator to examine any publicly available TOE Platform documentation that provides a description sufficient for the evaluator to determine that that functionality is provided. This will closely relate to the manner in which the TOE invokes this functionality. It is not necessary for the evaluator to perform explicit tests against the TOE platform as documented in the assurance activity for that SFR. All TOE platforms (hardware and software) must be explicitly listed in the Security Target, and must be designated either "evaluated" or "unevaluated".

If FIPS-approved functions are delegated to the TOE Platform, it will still be required for the ST to list the applicable CAVP or CMVP certificates for the claimed functions in the TSS, and make any equivalency claims with respect to the composition of the TOE platform and the configuration listed on the CAVP/CMVP certificate. In either case (evaluated or unevaluated TOE platform), the operational guidance must provide the administrator with the information specified in the assurance activities for all SFRs. A full description of how the TOE interfaces with the underlying platform must still be provided according to the requirements in the respective client PP. The validator report will outline the areas where requirements are met with an unevaluated TOE Platform.

In the future, NIAP will require all relevant underlying platform functionality be evaluated. At that time, PPs for platform-dependent products will be evolved such that responsibility for the evaluation of any underlying platform functionality is assigned to the vendor of that product. NIAP views invocation of underlying functionality as distinct from its evaluation, but in all cases, platform-dependent products are required to properly invoke underlying functionality.   In this interim, requirements with platform specific dependencies will remain as currently stated in NIAP PPs (i.e., there are no PP updates planned to address the interim guidance provided in this paper) and evaluation of platform-dependent products will be accepted and treated in the manner described above.