



## HIGH VALUE ASSET CONTROL OVERLAY

### Frequently Asked Questions

**1. Is the HVA Overlay required?**

- a. No. However, the HVA Control Overlay represents the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) technical guidance on how agencies should implement critical security controls for their HVA systems to mitigate against known threats and weaknesses.

**2. When is NIST SP800-53 R5 scheduled to be released as final?**

- a. NIST intends the release in the near future. While the HVA Overlay is consistent with the Initial Public Draft of NIST SP800-53 R5, application of the HVA Overlay is not dependent on the publication of NIST SP800-53 R5.

**3. Does the HVA Overlay apply to NIST SP800-53 R4?**

- a. The overlay controls are not dependent on NIST SP800-53 R5 and can be applied to systems with the NIST SP800-53 R4 baseline implementations.

**4. Why is DHS leading this effort?**

- a. The Federal Information Security Modernization Act (FISMA) of 2014 establishes the authority for DHS to administer the implementation of agency information security policies and practices for information systems.

**5. What is the difference between control enhancements and extensions?**

- a. An HVA Control Overlay control extension is an additional setting or configuration that must be implemented in addition to the configurations identified in the NIST SP800-53 R5 baseline.
- b. A control enhancement is the augmentation of a security or privacy control to build in additional, but related, functionality to the control, increase the strength of the control, or add assurance to the control.

**6. How many NIST SP800-53 R5 controls are part of the Overlay?**

- a. There are 97 overall controls in the Overlay; 35 of these controls are not included in the Moderate and High baselines; 47 are included as part of the Moderate *and* High baseline(s); and 62 controls are included in the High baseline.

**7. What is the HVA authorization boundary and how does the boundary impact an HVA that is part of a different FISMA system boundary?**

- a. The HVA authorization boundary represents the complete grouping of IT components included in the common management authority that enables the HVA mission objectives. Supporting systems should be further considered based on the impact of these components to the HVA risk posture.



**8. Does continuous monitoring require automation?**

- a. No. While automation can improve the efficiency of continuous monitoring, it is not required.

**9. How often will the HVA Control Overlay be updated?**

- a. DHS will continually monitor the risks and threats to HVAs and update controls in the Overlay on a regular basis to address those threats and risks.

**10. The application of the HVA Control Overlay is challenging and time consuming. Does DHS expect agencies to implement this overlay immediately?**

- a. Agencies should develop plan of action and milestones for the implementation of HVA Overlay controls to ensure effective and efficient implementation of the controls. Extensive planning may be required to fully implement the controls.

**11. How should conflicts between the HVA Overlay and any other overlays, such as the Privacy Overlay, be resolved?**

- a. Agencies should perform a risk assessment to determine the appropriate actions to resolve the conflict.

**12. Are there technical references or guidance on HVA control implementation?**

- a. Additional technical guidance to assist with the implementation of the overlay will be released in the coming months.

**FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION,  
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