

**Submission to  
Australian Cyber Security Strategy Discussion Paper**

from  
**ViewDS Identity Solutions**

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## Introduction

Our suggestions are from the perspective of an Australian-owned and based innovator, developer and exporter of cyber security software.

Our perspective is that of an SME frustrated with the lack of awareness of the availability of Australian sovereign software that could contribute to the four key areas of your strategy considerations (see Scope below).

This response is therefore specifically addressing Question 18 of your Attachment A

*“Are there opportunities for government to better use procurement as a lever to support and encourage the Australian cyber security ecosystem and ensure that there is a viable path to market for Australian cyber security firms?”*

## Scope

This submission impinges on the four key areas specified:

*A secure economy and thriving cyber ecosystem.*

Our ownership, management and R&D staff are all based in Australia, and our revenues and growth contribute 100% to the economy and to the cyber ecosystem

*A secure and resilient critical infrastructure and government sector.*

We could contribute to this, but current government procurement and consultancy advice practices effectively preclude it. We watch in horror as project after project awarded to international vendors fails, where our technology prima facie could meet the need, but there is no avenue for us to engage at an early stage.

*A sovereign and assured capability to counter cyber threats.*

The keyword is “sovereign”. Our capability and technology is certainly sovereign in the sense of being totally Australian-owned and based, but international vendors, consultants and cloud service providers are re-interpreting this to mean Australians employed by these international players.

*Australia as a trusted and influential global cyber leader, working in partnership with our neighbours to lift cyber security and build a cyber resilient region.*

I can't agree that Australia is “a trusted and influential global cyber leader”. All we do is ape overseas technologies, policies and trends, and other nations can do that by themselves.

However, we already export our software globally including to the Asia Pacific region where our differentiation is that we are easy and flexible to do business with – a serious factor with (particularly) US vendors and their current pricing and licensing practices

## About Us

ViewDS Identity Solutions develops innovative identity security software including cloud identity management solutions, directory services, access and fine-grained authorisation management solutions, and data synchronisation tools to meet the needs of managed service providers, enterprises, cloud service providers, systems integrators, and application developers. Design and development of innovative identity management software is our core competency and business.

We market via partners, integrators, white-label vendors, and our products are deployed in more than 30 countries across Australasia, Asia, Europe, the Middle East and North America.

Of particular recent interest and focus is the rapidly growing requirement for fine-grained ABAC based authorisation as a core basis for Zero Trust cyber security architectures, and for remedial recovery from penetration of enterprise IT systems. Our technology, that runs on premise and cloud, is a global leader in this field; it is currently being evaluated by a US company for potential US Department of Defense and government applicability.

Note that because our path to Australian government interest and procurement is effectively blocked, our resources are focussed on international partners where they have open minds.

## Suggestions

We advise against prescribing “Australian content” in tenders etc. It doesn’t work, as there are always “special reasons”, or it is filled up by using Australian human resources. And we do not need “preferred treatment” - we just need access to the requirement and a chance to discuss or propose our solution(s)

The fundamental issues for an SME are:

- how to let Australian SME vendors such as ourselves get exposure to the requirement before decisions on design, etc., are made by international consultants or integrators.
  - For instance the recent press publicity about the failure of a Permissions Capability platform. Prima facie, our Access Sentinel authorisation software could have core (and proven) capability for the management of permissions. A demonstration and proof of concept would have quickly revealed this, obviously at a comparatively insignificant cost.
- having to pick a bidding partner where they may lose for reasons other than our software.
  - For instance, our secure synchronisation technology (as used by Department of Defence) was proposed by an integrator for a requirement of an APSED tender, but another consultant won and apparently is writing code at government expense, for which we have a proven and supported product off the shelf.

## Conclusion

How to solve this is beyond this submission, but I trust the content helps. We would be willing to contribute to any meaningful discussion on expanding on our suggestions.

The core issue is whether Australia wants to lead, or to be a follower in cyber security technology. If the latter, there is no option for the likes of us other than to sell to, or move to the USA.

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