

2016: December

Greetings folks

This is the running update from the Executive Director. Have questions or comments? Suggest some added information or edits? Contact the ED colin@kantarainitiative.org

We've made it!

As @katrynadow tweeted, "And that's a wrap on 2016" (adding a lovely pic of the Sydney Harbour bridge and Opera House silhouetted against a backdrop of fireworks) there are no better words to offer.

As I write this, our members, friends and partners in Australia and New Zealand have already seen in the New Year, but are likely still celebrating 😊.

It's been a transformational year for Kantara, bringing its own challenges that together, we have all risen to and overcome. When I go back in time 12 months to when the Board made the unprecedented decision to self incorporate as a separate organization, replace its service management company, and initiate the transition of Exec Director - all in one single December 2015 meeting - the enormity of it at the time looked ... well... daunting!

Then when one adds the historic ructions in the political landscape and the appalling events brought on by war, terror and natural disaster, there's a valid case to be thankful for the end of 2016, so we can focus on doing our part in making 2017 100% positively memorable.

And there is a lot we can do.

In the world of identity we have been witness to the rise of the Blockchain phenomenon that might or might not herald a new dimension to counterbalance the rise of identity theft and hacking on a scale hitherto unseen, with seemingly no target immune.

And in the world of privacy and personal data, our electronic connectedness sees a global rippling effect on us all in the industry as the EU prepares for the enforcement of GDPR and the introduction of eID.

Our industry is stacked full of observers, commentators, bloggers, researchers, report writers, tweeters and re-tweeters. Nothing wrong in that. They all contribute in their own way.

But there are precious few organizations in the industry that actually develop things, build things and deploy things - developed, built and deployed by the community in the interests of humanity and ethics that tangibly help to put tools into the hands of users to make their online activities safer, more private and under their control.

Kantara is one of those precious few in the world. I hope that is why you are here reading this, identifying yourself with the pivotal role that this organization plays and all that it has to offer.

Often without public accolade or recognition, Kantara's member volunteers - drawn from the Directors, the Assurance Review Board, the Leadership Council, the approved CSPs, the accredited assessors, the organizational and individual members, liaison organizations, plus a long tail of non member participants - put to work their great minds to collaboratively conceive and develop real tools that 'walk' all that 'talk'.

We have [UMA](#) - the only profile in the world for distributed authorization and delegation built for the modern, lightweight mobile world - gaining attention and rapid adoption, not only from the tech sector, but increasingly from the legal and health professions, as we do with the Blockchain Smart Contracts DG. We have the [Consent Receipt specification](#) about to go to public review - another world first. We are recognised experts in conformity assessment with our experience in operating the Identity Assurance program for the US Federal government's [FICAM](#) initiative, with a clutch of partners looking at us to potentially extend it to assess and assure their trust frameworks. And we have the other Working Groups and Discussion Groups building towards their goals, such as but not limited to the new paradigm that [IRM](#) portends and the ID Pro Discussion Group's efforts to build a home for digital identity professionals.

Governments and policy-makers are attracted to Kantara by what they see at the grass-roots level and want it in the room in other fora - like [ITAC](#) in its role to support the OECD and in Vienna earlier this year to observe [UNCITRAL](#) - we welcome their interest.

What we strive to do and the egalitarian consensus driven culture in which we do it, is not for everyone however. While some folks have not renewed their membership in 2016, many more have chosen to join us. December's New Members are [OneWorldIdentity](#), [Collective Underwriters, Inc](#) and John Macaulay (of whom you will see much more in the Health Identity Assurance Working Group). A very warm welcome folks. We welcome your interest and your investment in time and money. We need all of it and more besides, if we are to do more of what we do. With more money and more volunteer effort, the more we can do - it's that simple 😊.

Your leadership has been working harder than ever this last quarter of the year to align the organization's positioning in 2017 with the work actually happening.

Finally, I want to take this opportunity to publicly thank my hard working dedicated staff - Ruth for all things [Identity Assurance](#) and [KIPI](#) - and Oliver for all things technical, web and visual, the super team at Virtual Management Inc and those individuals across the Board of Directors and its sub committees, the Leadership Council and [Working/Discussion groups](#) who have worked harder than anyone can imagine to drive the organization forward. You know who you are and I salute each and every one of you!

2017 will be a great year for Kantara. Of that I am certain. Enjoy the last hours of 2016 and prepare yourself for the great ride that 2017 is sure to be 😊.

Cheers!

Colin