

2021: February

Hello everyone

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

Welcome to this February 2021 posting of Director's Corner.

All around the world, as we come to terms with the virus and start to get ahead of it, we continue to strive towards life as it once was. February has seen great swings in weather - from unusually blizzard conditions in Texas to unusually warm temperatures in Europe. Whatever the weather, the beat goes on inside and around the Kantara community.

It was great to welcome Neustar as our most recent Trust Mark holder for a component service that conformed to Kantara's NIST 800-63-3 Class of Approval under Kantara's Identity Assurance Trust Framework. There are several more services under assessment as I write, so 2021 is set to be a pivotal year as Kantara's Trust Framework goes mainstream. Why now you might ask? I've asked myself the same question in recent months. In discussions with Assurance Director Ruth, Assurance Review Board Chair Leif, the main Board and regulars on the Identity Assurance Work Group calls, we have put it down to the 'perfect storm' that the current climate has created. So in no particular order...

1. There's the 'noise' around Trust Frameworks. That is good, because Kantara has been promulgating and operating a Trust Framework for conformity assessment and assurance since 2011 when the very first Trust Framework in this space (FICAM (Federal Identity, Credential, and Access Management) was launched by the US Federal Government. By design Kantara's Trust Framework was built to operate both as stand-alone, as it is seen today, or as the conformance and assurance sub-set of another Trust Framework as it was under FICAM (the Trust Framework Solutions portion officially deprecated January 31st). As folks look at the other Trust Frameworks operating today such as eIDAS (electronic IDentification, Authentication and trust Services) in Europe, or the TDIF (Trusted Digital Identity Framework) in Australia, and they hear about the PCTF (Pan Canadian Trust Framework) in Canada in MVP this year, and the Trust Frameworks being drafted in the United Kingdom, New Zealand and elsewhere, they are better able to understand the crucial role that Kantara's Trust Framework plays. That role is the crux of a Trust Framework - conformance, governance, responsibilities written into fully executed contracts. Structured policy, rules and requiring conformance to standards is all very well, but when 'the rubber hits the road', a jurisdiction considering cross recognition looks first and last at the veracity of the service providers' conformance as its baseline confidence indicator.
2. There's a growing realization that NIST SP 800-63 Rev 3 (and soon revision 4) remains as the de-jure de-facto standard just as its predecessor 800-63 Rev 2 (or in its international guise ISO/IEC 29115 or ITU-T's x.1254 Entity Authentication Assurance) was. You can find elements of them in the eIDAS Implementing Acts, in the UK's GPGs, in Canada's early work on CATS (Cyber Authentication Technology Solutions) Interface Architecture and Specification, in New Zealand's Authentication standards for online services. Authentication requirements in Australia's TDIF are pulled straight from 63-3. Slam dunk. So what standard are you going to choose to build your product against if you are an international IDaaS brand that is looking for the most cost effective conformance that gets you most of the way, in most jurisdictions, to minimize the incremental lift for in-country conformance? It's 800-63. It's akin to a prime number or form factor in mathematics, or the US dollar in currency where it's tradeable anywhere.
3. In the US, there is emerging evidence that those federal agencies charged with obligations under the OMB M 19-17 executive memo - which stipulate the adoption of 63-3 - are actively moving on those obligations. While we have not yet seen many of these downstream directives published in policy, there seems to be some informal industry chatter that points to a formal position being announced in coming months.
4. Globally, add the COVID effect where more people are needing more access to more services online - in healthcare, in Education, in Financial Services, in Government services, in essence everywhere.

And there you have it; the perfect storm that is evidenced by the steadily increasing adoption of Kantara's Trust Framework and in particular 800-63-3 (most cases at IAL2 and AAL2).

There's a sense of this phenomenon emerging in membership too. Please join me in welcoming new members Beruku Identity from the UK, and the Digital Identification Bureau from Papua New Guinea. Thanks to the continued support from renewing members Board Director Presidency holder IDEMIA, MIT Trust :: Data Consortium, Accredited Assessor KUMA, Accredited Assessor Seadot from Sweden, and Individual Contributors Janelle Allen, Lisa LeVasseur and Ross Foard. Thank you all! It's great to have you back!

Regular readers of this blog may recall my mention of the US Treasury's Financial Sector Policy Roundtable on February 9th. It was a great session (closed to most associations) where members Easy Dynamics, ForgeRock, IDEMIA, ID.me, Mastercard International and MIT Trust :: Data Consortium, together with myself representing Kantara, covered a range of topics across digital identity solutions, Trust Frameworks and certification, Digital Ledger Technologies (DLTs) and Blockchain, Risk and Fraud, and latest implementations. It was another great session where Kantara was referenced a number of times in the context of go-to best practice.

Speaking of events, the last week of February and into this first week of March, saw an onslaught of events that Kantara has been approached to speak or exhibit at. Keep an eye on [Kantara's events page](#) as the near-term ones get loaded. Included in them are

- [FinTech Talent Identity March 17](#) (Kantara moderating),
- [ONC's Annual Meeting March 29-30](#) (thank you ONC's Carmen Smiley! for helping with our virtual booth featuring IDENTOS, Patient Centric Solutions and the FIRE WG),
- [Think Digital Identity of Government UK May 21](#) (Kantara speaking and supporting), and
- [Identiverse 2021 June 21 -23](#) (ForgeRock, ID.me, ID Machines and Kantara speaking).

The All-Member-Ballot for the slate of four Directors-at-Large was successful, and they were fully engaged on the February Board call. Some have settled into the Board priority areas and I'll keep you updated on progress there.

There was so much more that went on in February that we can talk more about in March, but you have the highlights in this nutshell.

Stay safe, well and above all happy.

Kind regards,

Colin

Around the Houses:

Marketing:

- Follow us online: <https://twitter.com/KantaraNews> and <https://twitter.com/UMAWG> and <https://twitter.com/KantaraCISWG>.
- Miss something? See our press releases [here](#).
- Want to start a Kantara local chapter in your town? We are happy to help. Just [Contact us](#).

Program, Work Group and Discussion Group Updates:

- You can always keep up with the latest news from the Work and Discussion Groups directly on the [Leadership Council's Blog](#). See the list of public groups [here](#).
- As always, our Specifications, Recommendations and Reports are available for download from our [Reports and Recommendations](#) web repository - now with frictionless access.
- Not sure where to find things? Membership Bella, Trust Framework Operations & Assurance Director Ruth, Business Development Ambassador Chris, Board Secretariat Ken and myself, together with the Kantara IT team consisting of Sebastian and Gonzalo led by Armin are only too willing to assist. [Contact them here](#).

Events: [See them all here!](#)