



STANDARD

Market Participant Client Platform

Information Technology Standard

Issue 2.0

This document is intended to clearly and concisely present the standards and guidelines for the upgrade of the Market Participant Client Platform

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1.0	First Issue	December 7, 2005
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Related Documents

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None

Table of Changes

Reference (Section and Paragraph)	Description of Change
Section 1.2.1	Modified scope section to include the Java runtime Environment (JRE) into the Client Platform
Section 1.2.2	Minor edit to text
Section 1.5 paragraph 11	Updated definition to include the JRE
Section 2.1.1	Updated paragraph to include reference to Sun JRE & Remove the approved Exemption now that Netscape is no longer supported.
Section 2.1.2	Added paragraph to include reference to JRE.
Section 2.1.3	Added Guideline for Supported Versions of the JRE.
Section 2.1.6	Split the “Guideline – Timing for the support of new Client Platform Releases” into “Operating System and Browser” and “Java Runtime Environment” to reflect different timing needs.

1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose

- 1 The purpose of this document is to clearly and concisely present the standards and guidelines for the upgrade of the Market Participant Client Platform as defined in section 1.2.
- 2 At a high level, the following are some of the objectives that the IESO hopes to achieve as part of this Standard:
 - Mitigate Information Security risk to the marketplace by introducing “critical” security patches quickly with timing being dependent on the assessed risk of the vulnerability;
 - Minimize work for market participant and IESO resources in regression testing;
 - Where feasible, align upgrades to IESO’s release cycle (either market facing or internal release schedule);
 - Upgrades will be performed to address significant defects in current platform;
 - Move to a new service pack when we “have to” in order to maintain vendor support or address critical defects or security vulnerabilities, rather than maintain the latest version “because it is available”; and
 - Provide support for technical problems for the current platform plus the appropriate number of previous platform versions.

1.2 Scope

1.2.1 In Scope

- 3 This document includes the IESO standards and guidelines for the upgrade of the operating system, Java Runtime Environments (JRE) and internet browser (collectively referred to as the Client Platform or “Platform”) for interfacing with IESO’s market systems.
- 4 This document includes standards around the technology of the Platform, update frequencies for software Releases, Service Packs and Security Patches and length of support for older Platform versions.

1.2.2 Not In Scope

- 5 The following are not included in the scope of this Standard:

- Hardware standards – Minimum hardware standards are specified in the *Participant Technical Reference Manual (PTRM)*. These minimum standards will become less important as we move towards thin clients for future applications; and
- Office Systems including desktop and laptop computers.

1.3 Who Should Use This Document

- 6 This document is intended for IESO IT&I staff and vendors associated with the support of the Client Platform and responsible for the maintenance of IESO's market systems.
- 7 This document should also be read by market participants responsible for the maintenance and upgrade of their Client Platform so that they may understand the Standards being employed by the IESO. Market Participants are not obligated to follow these Standards but should understand how not following the Standards may impact them.

1.4 Assumptions and Limitations

- 8 TBD

1.5 Conventions

- 9 While this document is an IESO standard, the document also contains guidelines and suggestions which do not have to be followed. The differentiation followed for this document is as follows:
 - The word 'shall' denotes a mandatory requirement or standard; and
 - The word 'may' or "should" denotes an optional requirement or guideline.
- 10 The standard conventions followed for this document are as follows:
 - Quotation marks are used to highlight process or component names; and
 - Italics are used to highlight publication, titles of procedures, letters and forms.
- 11 The definitions followed for this document are as follows:
 - Full Release – A large scale upgrade to the platform to introduce significant functionality and/or security fixes (example: Windows 2000 to XP or IE 5.5 to 6.0 or JRE 1.5 to 1.6)
 - Service Pack – A significant upgrade to the platform to introduce new functionality and/or security fixes (example: Windows XP SP1 to SP2 or IE 6.0 to IE 6.0SP1)
 - Security Patch – A inter service pack upgrade specifically to address security vulnerabilities. Assessed by Microsoft as "Critical", "Moderate" or "Important"

1.6 Application of Standard

- 12 No exceptions shall be permitted to the standards herein without written authorization of IESO's IT&I Architecture Team. Exemptions may be sought from IESO's IT&I Architecture Team for each contravention of standard on a per instance basis.

– End of Section –

2. Standards & Guidelines

2.1 Applicability of the Standard

- 13 The Standards and Guidelines outlined in this section are required due to the close integration of the user interface with the back end applications that are currently in place at the IESO. With the introduction of the Market Portal this will allow the IESO to decouple the user interfaces (and hence their technologies) from the back end application. Once all market systems are integrated within the Market Portal (over the coming 3 – 5 years) the need for this standard will be re-addressed.

2.1.1 Standard – Client Platform Technology

- 14 Microsoft’s Windows Operating System, Internet Explorer (IE) and Sun’s Java Runtime Environment shall be the standard technologies supported by the IESO for its Client Platform.

Approved Exemptions

- 15 None

2.1.2 Standard – Supported Versions

- 16 The IESO shall verify its market systems against the current version of the operating system and browser plus the previous version of each under the condition that the previous version is still supported by the software vendor. Support in this context means that the vendor is still issuing security patches to address security vulnerabilities. The IESO cannot reasonably support Operating Systems and browsers not supported by the software vendor.
- 17 The IESO shall verify its market systems against specific versions of JRE required to support IESO applications.
- 18 Verification is the regression testing and/or high level checks of the application (depending on the type of patch or release applied) to ensure that it operates satisfactorily with the Client Platform.
- 19 The IESO shall post, to the Technical Interface Page, the versions of the Client Platform currently supported by the IESO.

Approved Exemptions

- 20 At their own risk, market participant’s may proceed to upgrade their client platform prior to the Client Platform becoming an IESO supported version.

2.1.3 Guideline – Supported Versions of the Java Runtime Environment (JRE)

- 21 The IESO should endeavour to maintain a single supported JRE for all market facing systems.

2.1.4 Standard – Introduction of Security Patches

- 22 Security patches assessed as “Critical” by IESO’s Information Security and Risk Management (ISRM) group shall be implemented as soon as possible from the time that the patch is available.
- 23 Security patches assessed as “High” by IESO’s ISRM group shall be implemented as part of the next available internal IESO release. There are 8 internal releases each year.
- 24 Security patches assessed as “Medium” or lower shall be scheduled appropriately as part of a future internal IESO release.
- 25 Market participants shall ensure that they keep up to date with the latest critical Microsoft and Sun security patches.

Approved Exemptions

- 26 No exemptions are approved.

2.1.5 Standard – Introduction of Full Release and Service Packs

- 27 Full Releases and Service Packs for the Client Platform shall be introduced as part of Market Facing (Category 2 or 3) Releases and details of the upgrade shall be documented as part of the Release Plan.

Approved Exemptions

- 28 No exemptions are approved.

2.1.6 Guideline – Timing for the support of new Client Platform Releases

Operating System and Browser

- 29 The IESO should support the introduction of new Service Packs to the Client Platform within six months of the date of release by the software vendor. This timing may not be achievable based on the release of the software by the vendor and could be as long as 7 or 8 months depending on the Release Note Submission deadline.

- 30 The IESO should support the introduction of a Full Release of the Client Platform within twelve months of the date of release by the software vendor. This target may be amended depending on other priorities.

Java Runtime Environment (JRE)

The IESO will support the introduction of a new Full Release or minor version upgrade to the JRE as required to address either security vulnerabilities functionality requirements for the IESO applications or IESO Architectural Standards.

Approved Exemptions

- 31 None

2.1.7 Standard – Communication regarding the need and timing to move to the next Service Pack or Full Release

- 32 IESO's intent to support the introduction of new Service Packs or Full Releases shall be communicated to market participants via the Release Management Process (I.e. included in the Market Facing Release Plan) and discussed at the first available IT Standing Committee meeting.

Approved Exemptions

- 33 No exemptions are approved.

– End of Section –

Appendix A: Known Contraventions

None noted at this time

– End of Section –

References

Document Name	Document ID
Market Manual 6: Participant Technical Reference Manual	IMO_MAN_0024

– End of Document –