



Department for
Science, Innovation
& Technology

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Chi Onwurah MP
Chair, Science, Innovation and Technology Committee,
House of Commons,
London,
SW1A 0AA

7th May 2025

PUBLICATION OF THE SOFTWARE SECURITY CODE OF PRACTICE

Dear Chi,

I am writing to notify you of the launch of the Software Security Code of Practice, which my department has published today. We wrote to your committee in May 2024 to inform you of the launch of our call for views, and in January 2025 to inform you of the publication of the government response to a call for views. Please see enclosed a copy of the Software Security Code of Practice. Accompanying technical material created by the National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) has also been published to support implementation of the code. I will place a copy of this letter and document in the libraries of the House.

Background

Software is the backbone of our digital world. From payment systems and business tools to AI-driven services, it powers our day-to-day lives. It is vital to the continued success and growth of the UK economy, creating new opportunities to drive productivity and innovation. However, this increasing dependency on software brings increasing risk. Software vulnerabilities can be exploited by malicious actors. Recent high-profile software incidents, such as SolarWinds and MOVEit, are reminders of what can happen when vulnerabilities are left unaddressed—affecting businesses, individuals, and the wider digital ecosystem.

There is a pressing need to ensure that software is meeting high standards of security throughout its lifecycle. DSIT has therefore worked with the NCSC and leaders from industry and academia to produce a Software Security Code of Practice.

The Software Security Code of Practice

The Software Security Code of Practice sets out the baseline expectations for any organisation that develops software and sells it to businesses. It contains actions on how software is developed, built, distributed and maintained, as well as measures to ensure transparent and effective communication with customers. The code aims to reduce the likelihood and impact of software supply chain attacks and other software

resilience incidents on the economy. This is in line with the government's commitment to enable businesses to safely harness the benefits of technology and ensure they are more widely shared across society.

The code is aimed at senior leaders in software vendor to ensure their organisations take the necessary steps to meet the expectations set out in the code, and have the resources, tools and knowledge they need to do so. To support the technical teams who are responsible for implementing these principles, the Software Security Code of Practice is supplemented by an implementation guidance. The code will also be accompanied by an NCSC-led assurance scheme.

This voluntary code promotes the uptake of baseline software security measures to ensure that technology sold to businesses in any sector is secure by design. This is to establish a minimum level of protection across all digital supply chains. However, certain organisations within these supply chains, particularly those supplying critical national infrastructure sectors, may need to adopt more stringent measures. These additional requirements will be specified in the Cyber Security and Resilience Bill.

The Software Security Code of Practice is also part of a wider package of policy interventions being developed by DSIT. These interventions include the Codes of Practice on Cyber Governance and on the Cyber Security of AI which will both drive improvements in security practices, outcomes, and confidence for UK organisations.

Next Steps

Following the publication of the Software Security Code of Practice, DSIT will work with industry to drive awareness and uptake of the code and the supporting technical materials.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Feryal Clark', is positioned above a faint, light blue rectangular stamp.

Feryal Clark MP
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for AI and Digital Government