EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This best practice guideline:

- explains the definition of an e-signature under ESRA;
- assists in the selection of e-signature solutions that meet business and legal needs;
- provides general direction on ensuring the authenticity, integrity, security and accessibility of e-records, including those that are electronically signed.

The guidelines are organized into two major sections entitled:

- **E-signature Guidelines:**
  - an overview of the business and legal functions of a signature;
  - how to determine if an e-signature solution is needed or desirable;
  - what is an “e-signature” under ESRA;
  - description of e-signature approaches;
  - how to select an appropriate e-signature approach through a business analysis/risk assessment process;
  - how to deal with records involving multiple e-signatures;
  - security of systems and information used to create e-signatures, and
  - “electronic facilitator” services that CIO/OFT provides to governmental entities, including:
    - consultations on how to complete and document the selection of appropriate e-signature solutions through the business analysis/risk assessment process;
    - consultations on specific e-signature technologies, and
    - informal advice and guidance on e-signature laws, regulation, standards and practices.

- **E-records Guidelines:**
  - what is an “e-record” under ESRA;
  - how to produce and capture e-records that meet legal, business and security requirements;
  - how to authenticate the identity of persons involved in an e-record transaction;
  - how to maintain authentic, reliable and accessible e-records over time;
  - approaches for maintaining the authenticity and integrity of electronically signed e-records, and
  - how to maintain secure, reliable and trustworthy e-record systems.

For additional assistance concerning ESRA-related topics, please contact:

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