

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

**DATE:** 22 September 2022

**TOPIC:** Questions on Digital Trust and Cybersecurity

### 1. Why do Digital Identities matter?

- Digital identities reduce fraud, increase people's online confidence, and streamline and simplify service delivery.
- Digital identities demonstrate commitment to modernization efforts and a thriving digital economy, and benefit both the public and private sectors.
- People need to feel empowered and in control of their personal information, only disclosing what is needed for any given situation.
- Verifiers of digital identities also need to feel confident in the authenticity and source of information they're presented with.
- Digital identities are a key part of cybersecurity efforts, helping combat the millions of unauthorized access attempts that provinces and territories tackle every day.

### 2. How is Digital Trust different from Digital Identity?

- A digital identity is an electronic representation of a person.
- Digital Trust is a much broader concept, which recognizes that it's only when a digital identity is trusted, that it can be used confidently for online transactions and communications.
- Digital Trust includes not just digital identities, but also ways to prove other things about a person and their organization, ways to be confident who's on the other end of the line, and ways to communicate securely and confidentially.

### 3. Why now for Digital Trust?

- We know from the June 2022 Québec symposium that provinces and territories share digital priorities that will drive digital growth and tackle cybersecurity threats. Digital Trust directly contributes to these shared priorities.
- Research shows that cyber threats are rapidly increasing, especially since the pandemic moved more work and play online. We need new Digital Trust tools to help combat these threats.
- Research also shows that the majority of people expect government to take the lead in protecting their personal information online. Digital Trust demonstrates governments' leadership and builds people's confidence and thriving digital economies.

- Provinces and territories invest in the integrity of physical identity cards because those identities need to be trusted and relied upon. We must now similarly invest in Digital Trust, and the integrity of digital identities, as the demand for online services increases.

#### 4. Don't we already have Digital Identity solutions?

- Provinces and territories have a variety of existing digital identity solutions. However, those solutions are not easily interoperable with each other. Also, most existing solutions are not easy, or not possible, for the private sector to utilize, and are not based on open standards.
- The demand for more complex digital interactions is increasing. These often require information from multiple digital identities to be presented. Traditional identity solutions were not designed to support this cross-credential use case.
- There are existing digital wallets on the market. However, they do not meet the levels of security, privacy, interoperability, and user experience that many provinces and territories expect and require.

#### 5. What are the benefits of the proposed Digital Identity solution?

- The proposed Digital Identity solution is based on digital credentials, a new Digital Trust technology, that's privacy-preserving, highly tamper-resistant, and highly secure:

**Confidentiality.** No one, other than the party a person is interacting with, knows when or how they are using digital credentials. There is no centralized platform.

**More control over personal information.** A person approves every use of their digital credentials, and only provides the information that's needed for a situation. It's also possible to prove things without providing the information itself; e.g., a person may prove they are over 19 without providing their date of birth.

**Instant verification.** A verifier can be instantly assured that the information is legitimate and hasn't been tampered with. They can also be assured that the information came from the correct organization without having to contact that organization. These features offer opportunities for streamlining processes.

**Private sector usage.** It is much easier for the private sector to use and verify digital credentials. Organizations of any size can request information from people's digital wallets and be confident in the authenticity of the information.

**More than just identity.** Digital credentials can also be licences, permits, membership cards, contracts, tickets, diplomas, access cards, or many other things that hold information about people or the organizations they represent.

**Secure and confidential communication.** Digital credentials go hand-in-hand with a secure technology for communicating confidentially with other parties. No one can eavesdrop on the conversation, and a connection can be reused in the

future, giving both parties confidence that the other party is still who they said they were.