

# The CER's draft interoperability principles

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At a broad level, interoperability is the ability for different systems, devices, or applications to exchange and use information in a co-ordinated manner. Interoperability allows for interconnectivity across systems and supports deep, liquid and enduring carbon markets.

This document provides draft principles for interoperability, informed by targeted consultation as part of the CER's Registry Interoperability Project, which ran during the second half of 2025. The focus of our targeted consultation included:

- Principles that could guide the CER's interoperability work – they could inform the CER's implementation of interoperability and set expectations for all third parties seeking to connect with CER systems if interoperability were implemented.
- The priorities for interoperability across the CER's units, certificates and registers.
- [Prototype interoperability models](#)<sup>1</sup> for interoperability use cases.

We held 3 workshops in July and August 2025, inviting respondents to our late [2024 consultation on carbon market infrastructure](#)<sup>2</sup> and other organisations identified as having a strong interest in interoperability with our systems. The workshops had 52 attendees from 39 organisations, representing CER's Unit and Certificate registry account holders, carbon market trading platforms and third-party certificate schemes. Respondents re-affirmed support for digital interoperability with CER systems, generally welcomed these draft principles for interoperability, and found the characterisation of prototype interoperability models to be accurate.

The Registry Interoperability Project yielded good understanding of use cases and needs for interoperability as well as the relevant legal, IT and security considerations. The CER found that legislative changes would be required to implement the prototype registry interoperability models for Australian Carbon Credit Units and Safeguard Mechanism Credit units.

The CER will look to develop some basic interoperability features within the existing legislative framework such as data exchange with third-party registries, and public project register APIs. This information is being published to provide a record for interested stakeholders. The CER is continuing to assess options to further improve the registry in the future.

While increased digital interoperability offers many benefits for participants in Australia's carbon and environmental markets, any enhanced interoperability implemented in future would complement but not replace existing ways of accessing CER systems.

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<sup>1</sup> [https://cer.gov.au/document\\_page/prototype-interoperability-models](https://cer.gov.au/document_page/prototype-interoperability-models)

<sup>2</sup> <https://cer.gov.au/news-and-media/public-consultations/carbon-market-infrastructure-holding-and-trading-certificates-and-units>



The CER welcomes further questions and feedback on this document and possible future interoperability work. If you are interested in joining the stakeholder mailing list or have feedback, please email [market-engagement@cer.gov.au](mailto:market-engagement@cer.gov.au).

## Draft interoperability principles

The CER administers Australia's world-leading, government-backed carbon, renewable energy and environmental markets. The CER values and is a steward of these government-created environmental markets and the ecosystem around them, reflecting the [Minister of Climate Change and Energy's expectations and CER's intent](#)<sup>3</sup> to promote and support well-functioning markets that are deep, liquid, transparent and accessible.

The CER has an ongoing work program to implement digital interoperability between external systems and the Unit and Certificate Registry, its modern digital blockchain registry with API-first design. In implementing interoperability, upholding our legal obligations and Australian Government policies and frameworks, such as for IT security, are essential.

The CER welcomes digital interoperability between third-party systems and the CER's Unit and Certificate Registry, provided third parties act consistently with all relevant legal obligations and these principles for interoperability.

1. **Market functionality:** The CER's registry and interoperability investments and actions will seek to actively enable deep, liquid, transparent and accessible markets.
2. **Maintain core services:** API-first interoperability will complement but not replace access to CER systems via the CER's Online Services.
3. **Source of truth:** The CER registry and other information such as scheme registers provided by the CER continue to be recognised as the authoritative 'source of truth' for ownership and attributes of units and certificates for the schemes we administer.
4. **Accurate representations:** The CER has zero tolerance for misrepresentation of the schemes it administers. Australia's carbon market ecosystem features third-party certificates and products related to, or deriving their value from, the units and certificates administered by the CER. Any claims that third-party certificate and product creators make about linked government-backed units or certificates must be accurate.

The CER will facilitate but not endorse trading platform or third-party certificate linkages.

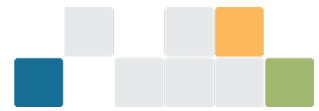
5. **User compliance and regulatory roles:** All parties accessing the registry are responsible for complying with their legal obligations including having and maintaining any correct licences. The CER may engage with relevant regulators, such as Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC) to assure ourselves that relevant Australian Financial Services and Clearing and Settlement Facility licences have been obtained. To avoid doubt, the functions of other regulators in carbon and environmental markets, such as ASIC, are not impacted by interoperability functionality of CER systems.

The CER may restrict, suspend or revoke a user's access to interoperability where the user fails to meet applicable compliance requirements.

6. **Support participation and neutrality:** The CER will support equal access and a level playing field among third parties seeking registry interoperability. This would include, where practical, using common

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<sup>3</sup> <https://cer.gov.au/about-us/our-reports-and-accountability/statement-expectations-and-intent>



approaches for classes and models of interoperability rather than approving bespoke approaches, thus reducing costs and complexity.

7. **Transparency:** The CER promotes transparency to the extent possible within legislation and encourages participants to make information available voluntarily.

For example, to encourage price transparency, the CER may consider access conditions for market trading platforms which facilitate post-trade transparency of over-the-counter aggregated statistics on transaction prices and volumes.