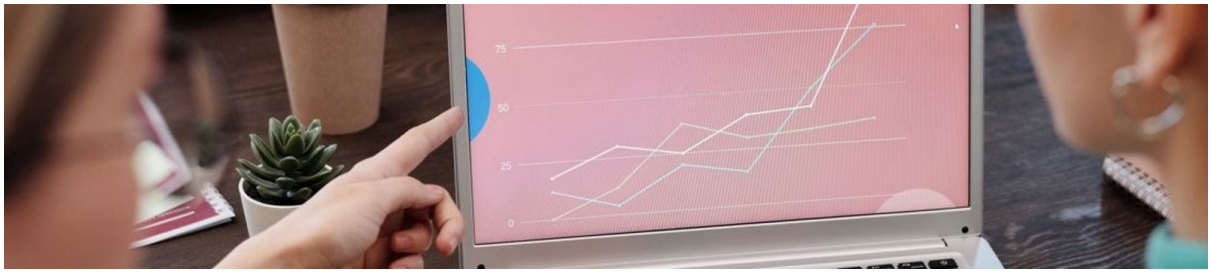
TECHNOLOGY BRIEF · CYBER FRAMEWORKS

Essential Eight & ASD Essentials

Australia's cyber security baseline, what changed in October 2026, and where your business stands



Short answer: the Essential Eight is the Australian Signals Directorate's baseline of eight mitigation strategies, measured in maturity levels. On 15 October 2026 ASD published its successor, ASD Essentials. Both stay on cyber.gov.au during the transition, and Essential Eight work carries forward. whedo.it assesses where you stand, fixes the gaps in order and gives you the evidence.

The eight strategies

Strategy	In plain English
Patch applications	Update apps quickly, especially internet-facing ones.
Patch operating systems	Update Windows and retire versions that no longer get updates.
Multi-factor authentication	A second factor on every account, increasingly phishing-resistant.
Restrict admin privileges	Everyday accounts can't change the system.
Application control	Only approved software runs.
Restrict Office macros	Macros from untrusted sources are blocked.
User application hardening	Browsers and Office locked down against common attack routes.
Regular backups	Protected backups that have been restored on test.

What whedo.it does

- **Assess** your environment against the Essential Eight and SMB1001 and report the maturity level for each strategy.

- **Prioritise** a phased roadmap that fixes the controls stopping the most common attacks first.
- **Implement** with Microsoft 365 Business Premium, Intune, Defender, Acronis and our monitoring, then keep the evidence.
- **Transition** your work to ASD Essentials as ASD's arrangements firm up, without starting again.

Key facts

Fact	Detail
Maturity levels	Level 0 to Level 3. ASD advises choosing a target level and reaching it across all eight strategies before moving higher.
Current model	The Essential Eight maturity model was last updated in November 2023.
ASD Essentials	Published 15 October 2026 with chapters for enterprise IT, operational technology and cloud; transition arrangements continue into 2027.

Next step

Book a 30-minute scoping call. We'll walk the eight strategies against your setup and name the three things to fix first. Warren Ephron · 0421 346 887 · warren@whedoit.com

Sources: Australian Signals Directorate (Essential Eight maturity model and changes, ASD Essentials, Annual Cyber Threat Report 2025–26); Dynamic Standards International (SMB1001). Full links in the whedo.it technology guide.