

SAMA spotlight | IT governance frameworks

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In November 2021, the Saudi Central Bank (SAMA) issued a circular on IT governance frameworks as part of its cybersecurity rules and instructions. Recognising that – while IT is playing an increasingly fundamental role in today’s data-driven environments – IT also exposes the financial institutions (FIs) it regulates to dynamically evolving IT risks, SAMA has developed an IT governance framework to be implemented in conjunction with its cybersecurity and business continuity frameworks.

SAMA's IT governance framework has three key objectives - to:

- Create a common approach for addressing IT risks
- Achieve an appropriate maturity level of IT controls
- Ensure IT risks are properly managed

Structured around four domains - IT governance and leadership; IT risk management; IT operations management and system change management - the framework includes sub-domains, each of which has a principle - the main set of IT controls related to the sub-domain - and control requirements - mandated IT controls.

SAMA's IT governance framework maturity model

Maturity level	Criteria
0 Non-existent	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ No documentation▪ No awareness of/attention to certain IT controls
1 Ad hoc	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ IT controls not/only partially defined/performed inconsistently
2 Informal	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ IT controls based on informal/unwritten practice - even if standardised
3 Structured	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ IT controls defined/approved/implemented in a formalised way▪ Implementation of IT controls can be demonstrated
4 Managed	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Effectiveness of IT controls regularly assessed and improved as necessary - and the assessment process is documented
5 Adaptive	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ IT controls are continuously improved in a formal, planned process

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Our IT governance assessment methodology

Our market-leading team – which has significant IT governance framework expertise – can assess the maturity of your current and future IT governance frameworks against SAMA’s maturity matrix and develop practical road maps to improved maturity.

Further information

For more information on SAMA's IT governance framework maturity model, visit our webpage or download our domain-specific flyers:

- [IT governance and leadership](#)
- [IT risk management](#)
- [IT operations management](#)
- [System change management](#)