

Request for Information for a Private Cloud Solution

What We Heard Report

Friday, May 24th, 2024 | Version 1



Shared Services
Canada

Services partagés
Canada

Canada



Table of Contents

1	Introduction	3
2	Common Themes from What We Heard	3
3	What We Heard on the Benefits and Challenges of Private Cloud	4
4	What We Heard on Consuming & Deploying HaaS	5
4.1	GC Consuming HaaS	5
4.2	Deploying HaaS in the GC Enterprise Data Centre	6
4.3	Deploying HaaS on Third-Party Data Centres	6
5	What We Heard on Deploying and Operating an IaaS Platform	8
5.1	Benefits and Challenges of GC Deploying and Operating an IaaS Platform	8
5.2	Options for Operating an IaaS Platform	8
6	What We Heard on the Procurement Process and Future Contracts	9
6.1	Fair, Efficient and Successful Outcomes for Canada and Industry	9
6.2	Vendor Engagement and Collaboration	10
6.3	An Outcome-Based Approach	10
6.4	Roles and Responsibilities	10
6.5	Statement of Challenge	11
6.6	Potential Points of Failure and Risks	11
7	Key Considerations and Recommendations	12
8	What Canada Will Do	13

1 Introduction

The purpose of the Request for Information (RFI) was to help Canada gather insight from Industry regarding Hardware as a Service (HaaS) and Infrastructure as a Service (IaaS) Platform. The RFI marks the beginning of the initial phase of Industry feedback related to the procurement of Private Cloud for the Government of Canada (GC).

This *What We Heard Report* (WWHR) represents the key findings from the RFI process conducted between March 25th and April 15th, 2024, which aimed at gathering insights from a diverse group of Industry stakeholders. The demographics of the 30 respondents included solution integrators, resellers, cloud providers, and consulting firms, ensuring a broad perspective on the upcoming Private Cloud procurement and its associated HaaS and IaaS platform. To launch the RFI process, Canada hosted an information webinar on March 27th, 2024, which was attended by over 45 Industry representatives. In addition to the quantitative and qualitative data obtained through the questionnaire, we received a total of 9 video submissions.

The first section of this report will highlight what we heard from Industry and the subsequent section will share Canada's interpretation of the feedback and the intended actions based on the information provided.

This report provides a summary of 11 key common themes from Industry's responses.

2 Common Themes from What We Heard

The following section represents the key themes that emerged from the analysis of the Industry responses to the RFI. These themes represent the most significant patterns in the responses received and are listed based on the frequency in which the theme was raised. These same themes will be repeated throughout the report.

- 1) **Cost Efficiency and Management:** Industry emphasized predictable budgeting, transitioning from capital expenditure (CapEx) to operational expenditure (OpEx), and the examination of total cost ownership to ensure fiscal responsibility in cloud adoption.
- 2) **Scalability and Flexibility:** Industry highlighted the capability to dynamically adjust cloud resources in response to organizational requirements and workload fluctuations.
- 3) **Security and Compliance:** Industry acknowledged the importance of dedicated resources, and robust access controls, as well as an alignment with data sovereignty laws to ensure government data security and privacy.
- 4) **Vendor Dependency and Lock-In:** Industry cautioned against the risks associated with reliance on specific hardware vendors for maintenance and the challenges of engaging with a single provider, which can limit future options and adaptability.
- 5) **Access to Latest Technology and Infrastructure:** Industry addressed the need for regular technological updates and access to advanced hardware without the burden of obsolescence or ownership.
- 6) **Training and Skills Development:** Industry advocated for skill development in cloud management and architecture to accommodate government employees.

- 7) **Disaster Recovery and Business Continuity:** Industry focused on the criticality of having robust backup strategies and high availability features in private cloud services to safeguard critical government operations.
- 8) **Governance and Performance Management:** Industry discussed the need for robust governance structures, performance metrics, and vendor performance management to ensure consistent service quality and accountability.
- 9) **Integration with Existing Systems:** Industry identified compatibility with existing infrastructure and interoperability issues as challenges that need to be addressed for effective cloud service integration.
- 10) **Service Level Agreements (SLAs):** Industry stressed the importance of solid SLAs in safeguarding performance and reliability, along with defining clear expectations for contingency plans in service delivery.
- 11) **Strategic Alignment and Planning:** Industry considered aligning HaaS and IaaS consumption with broader IT (Information Technology) strategies and emphasizes planning for a complex balance of financial, operational, strategic, and security considerations.

3 What We Heard on the Benefits and Challenges of Private Cloud

From the 30 responses received, it is evident that private cloud adoption offers significant advantages for the GC, including enhanced security, data sovereignty, scalability and flexibility, disaster recovery, cost, and many more.

One of the most significant benefits highlighted by Industry is enhanced security, specifically data sovereignty, privacy, and disaster recovery. Data sovereignty is consistently cited as a benefit, ensuring that sensitive government data is stored within Canada's boundaries, complies with national laws, and safeguards citizens' information, thereby reinforcing trust. In addition, Industry stated that a private cloud enhances security and compliance by offering robust security features such as dedicated resources, encrypted storage, and robust access controls tailored to meet stringent government standards, thus safeguarding sensitive data against potential breaches. Furthermore, compliance with regulatory requirements is streamlined. A private cloud can be configured to adhere strictly to Canadian governmental policies and standards. Industry frequently mentioned a private cloud's ability to provide robust disaster recovery solutions in the event of emergencies. Industry highlighted that a private cloud offers robust backup and recovery strategies. This ensures the continuity of critical public services with minimal downtime during emergencies by replicating data and applications across geographically dispersed data centres.

Additionally, Industry highlighted that a private cloud offers dedicated infrastructure supporting operational efficiency, scalability, flexibility, and modernization. Industry mentioned across many responses that a significant benefit of private cloud are its operational efficiency, specifically having dedicated resources, encrypted storage, and robust access controls. A crucial attribute of such infrastructure is to allow organizations such as the GC to rapidly adjust, and scale resources as demands and workloads change. With that constant and frequent changes in technology, an advantage of private cloud is that it allows modernization and integration of outdated legacy systems with newer technologies in a quicker and more efficient manner. An example highlighted by the

Industry concerns peak periods such as the end-of-fiscal-year and tax-filing season. During these times, organizations can seamlessly expand their Private Cloud Infrastructure, optimizing service delivery and user experience without incurring the high upfront cost of procuring hardware.

Finally, many responses highlighted the benefit of cost predictability and efficiency. Industry explained that centralizing IT resources into a private cloud environment optimizes resource utilization. This will allow the GC to reduce operational costs associated with managing disparate legacy systems and fluctuating demands, eliminating the need for costly hardware procurement.

In addition to the main benefits and challenges, Canada found a contradiction in the responses from Industry:

Private Cloud Vs. Public Cloud

One of the responses stated the following: "Our global experience shows that private clouds no longer offer significant value as the capabilities, capacities, security, and resilience of hyperscale clouds cannot be matched". This suggests a preference for public cloud services over private cloud solutions. However, many other statements highlight the significant benefits a Private Cloud offers, specifically for government entities, including enhanced security, compliance, data sovereignty, and tailored infrastructure.

In summary, Industry responses suggest that a private cloud solution aligns with the GC's objectives, helping modernize operations while upholding strict security compliance, resource management, and service efficiency standards.

4 What We Heard on Consuming & Deploying HaaS

4.1 GC Consuming HaaS

When Industry was asked about GC consuming HaaS, the most common benefits included cost efficiency, scalability, access to latest technologies, and support and maintenance. As for the challenges, Industry highlighted long-term costs, vendor dependency and lock-in, data security and compliance, integration with existing systems, and contractual obligations. All these benefits and challenges are explained in the Common Themes section.

In addition to the main benefits and challenges, Canada found some contradictions in the responses from Industry in the following areas:

- 1) **Cost Efficiency:** Some responses suggested HaaS is cost efficient due to the shift from CapEx to OpEx, with more predictable costs and no upfront costs. While other responses argued that HaaS can be more expensive in the long run compared to purchasing hardware up front.
- 2) **Vendor Lock-In:** Some responses suggested that HaaS can lead to vendor lock-in, which could limit the GC's ability to switch providers or negotiate terms, while others suggested HaaS offers full control over the hardware choices and the ability to mix and match vendors or even the option to buy equipment at the end of the term.
- 3) **Maintenance and Support:** Some responses stated that HaaS can help reduce the maintenance burden on internal IT teams, with vendors handling hardware maintenance and support. Alternatively, other responses highlighted the risk of dependency on service providers for

maintenance and support, which could affect operations if the service provider does not offer robust SLAs.

In conclusion, while there are many synergies around the common themes in the benefits and challenges of HaaS, there are also significant differences in how these benefits and challenges are perceived by Industry. This indicates to the GC a lack of consensus on the overall value of HaaS.

4.2 Deploying HaaS in the GC Enterprise Data Centre

When Industry was asked about deploying HaaS in a GC Enterprise Data Centre (EDC), common benefits such as cost management, scalability, flexibility, access to the latest technologies, and strategic alignment were identified. Challenges highlighted by Industry included vendor dependency and lock-in, data security and compliance, integration with existing systems, operational and governance changes, and long-term financial implications. These benefits and challenges are further explained in the Common Themes section.

In addition to the main benefits and challenges, we found contradictions in the responses from Industry:

1) Cost Savings vs. Upfront Investment: Several responses highlighted the economic advantages of deploying HaaS, including reduced capital expenditures and the transition to operational costs. Conversely, feedback from Industry points to the potential need for substantial upfront investment, particularly if current EDCs lack the required space for scaling up.

2) Resource Efficiency vs. Resource Limitations: Some responses suggested that traditional data centres may lack the ability to meet the power and cooling needs of modern HaaS solutions, potentially leading to environmental inefficiencies. Conversely, other feedback points out the environmental benefits of using existing uninterruptible power supplies (UPS) and redundant power systems within an EDC, implying that utilizing current data centres can offer environmental efficiency.

In conclusion, Industry acknowledged the complexities associated with deploying HaaS in a GC's data centre. The advantages of HaaS, such as fiscal savings in the long term, enhanced adaptability, access to cutting-edge technologies, and alignment with government strategies, are clear. However, there are concerns surrounding an overdependence on vendors, safeguarding of data, integration of legacy and contemporary systems, administration of transitions, and the consideration of long-term expenditures.

Overall, the varied perspectives indicated careful planning is essential for the successful implementation of HaaS. The decision to adopt HaaS must be deliberate, considering all associated costs, space, power requirements, and environmental impacts. With this approach, the GC can modernize its data centres effectively and responsibly.

4.3 Deploying HaaS on Third-Party Data Centres

When Industry was asked about deployment HaaS on a third-party data centre, the most common benefits included cost management, scalability, flexibility and advanced infrastructure. As for the challenges, Industry highlighted vendor lock-in, data security and compliance, integration and compatibility, and cost management. All these benefits and challenges are explained in the Common Themes section.

Other benefits related to the deployment of HaaS on third-party data centres not included as part of the main themes are:

- 1) Access to Expertise:** Outsourcing to third-party data centres provides access to specialized expertise in managing data centre infrastructure, which can enhance operational efficiency.
- 2) Geographic Redundancy:** Utilizing data centres across various locations can enhance disaster recovery and business continuity capabilities.
- 3) Focus on Core Competencies:** By outsourcing hardware management, the GC can focus on strategic initiatives and core business functions.
- 4) Advanced Infrastructure:** Third-party data centres often have state-of-the-art infrastructure, which can provide high-performance computing and innovative service delivery methods without significant capital investment.

In addition to the main benefits and challenges, the GC found contradictions in the responses from Industry in the following areas:

- 1) Security and Compliance:** Some responses suggested that third-party data centres are well equipped to handle security and compliance requirements, having experience with government contracts and necessary controls in place. Others expressed concerns about the challenges and risks associated with ensuring that third-party providers meet the GC's stringent security and compliance standards.
- 2) Vendor Dependency:** One perspective highlighted the benefits of leveraging third-party expertise and infrastructure, which can lead to operational efficiencies and cost savings. Alternatively, other responses cautioned against the risks of vendor dependency, such as potential service disruptions, limited control, and difficulties in managing vendor relationships.
- 3) Cost Savings:** Many responses emphasized the potential cost savings and financial flexibility associated with using third-party data centres, including economies of scale and reduced capital expenditures. However, some responses warned of potential increased long-term costs due to contractual terms and the need for careful cost management to ensure ongoing economic benefits.
- 4) Control Over Hardware and Environment:** Some responses indicated that third-party data centres can provide advanced infrastructure and support that the GC might not be able to maintain on its own, suggesting a benefit of outsourcing. In contrast, there are concerns about limited control over hardware selection, network configurations, and operational policies when using third-party facilities.
- 5) Speed of Deployment:** Some responses asserted that third-party data centres allow for rapid deployment and scalability, which is a clear advantage. Yet, there was mention that deploying HaaS in a third-party data centre might take more time to reach Authority to Operate (ATO) due to the time required to implement and evidence security controls.

These contradicting responses reflect the complexity of the decision-making process for deploying HaaS in third-party data centres. They underscore the need for the GC to carefully evaluate the benefits and risks, consider diverse perspectives, and determine the best approach based on specific business outcomes and requirements.

In summary, the responses consistently recognized the trade-offs between the benefits of cost savings, expertise, and scalability against the challenges of security, compliance, and vendor dependency when deploying HaaS in third-party data centres.

5 What We Heard on Deploying and Operating an IaaS Platform

5.1 Benefits and Challenges of GC Deploying and Operating an IaaS Platform

When Industry was asked about deploying and operating an IaaS Platform, the most common benefits included cost efficiency, disaster recovery, enhanced security and compliance, business continuity, flexibility and agility, and scalability. As for the challenges, Industry highlighted security risks, vendor lock-in, skill gaps and training, integration complexity, and operational oversight. All these benefits and challenges are explained in the Common Themes section.

Other insights related to deploying and operating an IaaS platform not included as part of the main themes are:

- 1) **Use of Open Architectures:** Industry discusses the leverage of open architectures for enhancing flexibility and avoiding vendor lock-in, a benefit that emphasizes the strategic technology choices.
- 2) **Self-Service Portals:** Industry identifies the enablement of self-service portals as a unique benefit for streamlined management, with the focus on reducing the need for dedicated IT resources and enhancing user autonomy.

5.2 Options for Operating an IaaS Platform

When Industry was asked about other available options for operating an IaaS Platform on top of hardware, two variations were highlighted: open-source and proprietary platforms.

Considering the benefits and drawbacks of each option, industry recommended that Canada evaluate a range of factors in their decision-making process. The most frequently cited factors included control, customization, scalability, application compatibility for present and future needs; availability of skilled resources for platform operation; comprehensive cost analysis covering total ownership costs and return on investment; alignment of features and functionalities with the GC's specific needs; security considerations; and the performance track record of the various platform options. Ultimately, the chosen platform should satisfy the GC's immediate and future requirements and objectives.

Industry highlighted options for how Canada can operate an IaaS platform. These options range from self-managed solutions such as an SSC operated IaaS platform to a fully outsourced service where the third-party fully manages the IaaS platform. The table below summarizes each option.

Options	Explanation
Fully Managed Service "Full Stack" "Cloud in-a-box"	Some respondents indicated that they offer fully managed solutions, including hardware/IaaS/PaaS/SaaS services to form a complete Private Cloud.

Third-Party Managed	Some respondents indicated that they offer a managed IaaS Platform, where they interface with the hardware and software vendors.
SSC Managed “Self-hosted”	Some respondents indicated that the GC could construct its own IaaS Platform using open-source software, such as OpenStack, or Commercial-off-the-shelf (COTS).

Many vendors addressed this question from the operating model and overall solution perspective as opposed to the IaaS platform in and of itself in the context of Private Cloud. This included varying perspectives as it relates to the platform virtualization, such as hypervisor and container-based architectures, Bare Metal as a Service (BMaaS), self-service provisioning and infrastructure as code support, and Platform as a Service (PaaS) functionality.

In addition, some respondents elaborated on their recommendation to Canada to consider a comprehensive operating model that covers private, public and on premises environments with a capability to coordinate and automate the management over multiple clouds.

6 What We Heard on the Procurement Process and Future Contracts

6.1 Fair, Efficient and Successful Outcomes for Canada and Industry

There is Industry consensus around the need for clear and detailed requirements including a balanced evaluation criteria that fairly weigh price, experience, technical excellence, features, and overall value. In addition, there is a robust push for innovation and continuous improvements, where evaluations take into consideration past performance as an indicator of future success and encourage the submission of innovative solutions.

Other most commonly cited similarities across Industry responses included:

- Suggestions related to a balance between price and experience, with an emphasis on value over cost and technical excellence.
- An expressed preference for rated scores that are based on evidence of experience, with qualitative assessments that include reference checks.
- Industry’s desire for contracts that accommodate evolving technology and business needs with solutions that are adaptable to future technologies and changing requirements.
- An emphasis from vendors on innovation and continuous improvement, leveraging Industry innovation.
- Consideration for Industry’s input on the evaluation criteria with meaningful consultations, one-on-one meetings, and collaboration platforms for feedback.

- Suggestion for Canada to avoid a "winner takes all" approach by qualifying multiple vendors.
- Industry's emphasis on incorporating sustainability and social responsibility into vendor evaluations.
- The vendors' desire to see an outcomes-based procurement that focuses on results rather than dictating technical requirements. This ties into the creation of value.

Other suggestions shared of interest to Canada included:

- Applying a Proof of Concept to assess capabilities and vendors' ability to meet the technical requirements as well as the use of a scenario-based assessment.
- Some vendors emphasize the importance of evaluating the overall value of a solution over its life cycle, not only the upfront costs.
- Considering a term length of no less than 5 years with options to extend, taking into account the significant investments involved.
- In collaboration with the industry, addressing potential issues with Terms and Conditions, including limitation of liability clauses.
- Considering incentives for service providers that efficiently handle provisioning.
- From the perspective of a Canadian solution integrator, there is an emphasis on the role of Canadian businesses, considering the socio-economic impacts and regional benefits associated with this procurement.

6.2 Vendor Engagement and Collaboration

Industry responses called for the establishment of direct and open lines of communication where vendors can actively provide input, engage in consultations and one-on-one discussions, and offer feedback and recommendations. The procurement model should foster this engagement at every stage, including negotiations, emphasizing the selection of multiple vendors in a way that supports collaboration and circumvents a "winner-takes-all" scenario. Canada should maintain a transparent, fair and flexible procurement process that promotes competition and innovation.

6.3 An Outcome-Based Approach

Many vendors suggested shifting the focus towards the desired results and outcomes realized from a procurement, rather than the adherence to specific technical requirements. Vendors highlighted the benefits of an outcome-based approach which includes defining outcomes that allow Industry to propose their best solutions, prioritizing collaborative conversations between the GC and vendors, and the use of accountability as a method to measure overall success.

6.4 Roles and Responsibilities

From Industry's feedback, it has become evident to Canada that the division of roles and responsibilities between SSC and the Contractor will vary significantly based on the model chosen. The main request from Industry is for clear roles and responsibilities. Industry has expressed concerns that ambiguity in roles could lead to accountability issues and operational inefficiencies.

This can be compounded if multiple vendors are involved in the solution based on the selected model.

6.5 Statement of Challenge

The majority of the respondents found the Statement of Challenge (SOC) to be clear, with 22 out of 30 answering, “Yes”. For those who found the SOC unclear, their responses suggest a desire a more detailed, clear, and actionable problem statement and objectives, with a focus on specific business needs, cost management, data sovereignty, and the modernization of IT services and talent management. Canada will update the SOC to bring more clarity to Industry.

6.6 Potential Points of Failure and Risks

When asked about how Canada might fail at deploying a Private Cloud solution by consuming HaaS and deploying an IaaS platform, Industry had some common and unique views with many useful insights for Canada on key risks to consider. The most common failure points highlighted by Industry included the misalignment of the procurement with business goals and requirements, overlooking the broader ecosystem and interdependencies; and lack of clear accountabilities between Canada and Vendors. In addition, Industry commonly highlighted the following potential failure points:

- Overreliance on technology without addressing the process and culture.
- A lack of end-to-end governance model with clear responsibilities and vendor accountability.
- From a deployment standpoint:
 - Choosing unsuitable IaaS platforms.
 - Inadequate scope of requirements.
 - Underestimation of integration efforts.
 - Misconfiguration and improper life cycle management.
 - Capacity management issues.
 - Slow incident and change management response.
 - Accountability issues between hardware and IaaS platform vendors.
 - Vendor accountability for support, maintenance and updates/upgrades.
- From a cost and model perspective:
 - Significant total cost of ownership if not considered upfront and lack of benchmark data.
 - Unproven combination of HaaS and IaaS at scale.
 - Lack of agility and innovation.
 - Compatibility and supply chain issues.
- From the perspective of consuming HaaS & IaaS
 - Failure to assess workload requirements.
 - Overlooking integration with existing infrastructure.
 - Ignoring security and compliance framework.
 - Inadequate scalability and growth planning.
 - Lack of financial and operational monitoring.

A number of additional points of failure were raised by unique vendors that were of interest to Canada, including:

- Not considering the benefits of an IT managed service provider to deploy private cloud.

- Not considering a ‘full-stack ecosystem’ as potentially lower risks to Canada.
- Not leveraging open-source solutions to enable simpler onboarding and provide socio-economic benefits through the creation of Canadian jobs.
- Not adequately consulting Industry on the design of the service delivery model and the financial model.

A number of risks were frequently identified by Industry that will require due consideration that reflect the complexity of deploying a Private Cloud solution and the need for a comprehensive approach to address technical, operational, strategy and vendor-related challenges. Risks included:

- Investing in a solution that lacks agility to innovate and provide advanced functionalities like artificial intelligence (AI), machine learning (ML) and analytics.
- Setting expectations based on public cloud consumption model may not align with private cloud offerings.
- Balancing the use of open-source frameworks with the procurement of managed full-stack cloud solutions.
- Vendor lock-in and overreliance on a single HaaS provider or IaaS platform vendor.
- Lack of integration with existing systems and applications including compatibility issues over the term of the private cloud.
- Cost overruns, unanticipated costs and consideration for the total cost of ownership.

7 Key Considerations and Recommendations

The RFI responses from Industry presents important insights, key considerations and recommendations that will inform the development of the Private Cloud solicitation. These are summarized by themes below (in no order):

1. **Broader Scope and Flexibility:** Industry suggested the government to not limit its options to specific models like HaaS and IaaS, but rather to consider a broader range of services and capabilities that can be provided by a private cloud. This includes a call for a comprehensive needs assessment and consideration of various cloud deployment models.
2. **Security and Compliance:** Industry described security, compliance, and data sovereignty as a common theme. The text frequently mentions the importance of ensuring that private cloud solutions adhere to strict security standards and regulatory requirements, including data residency and sovereignty.
3. **Vendor Selection and Evaluation:** Industry stated the importance of careful vendor selection based on criteria such as reliability, scalability, security practices, and compliance with Canadian regulations. This includes the recommendation to avoid vendor lock-in and to ensure interoperability with existing systems.
4. **Scalability and Elasticity:** Industry emphasized the need for scalable and flexible solutions that can adapt to changing demands. This includes the ability to scale resources up or down as needed and to ensure that the cloud infrastructure can support fluctuating workloads.

5. **Integration and Interoperability:** Industry stated the need for seamless integration with existing systems and workflows is frequently mentioned, with a focus on ensuring that new cloud services can work in harmony with current IT infrastructure.
6. **Cost Management and Optimization:** Industry suggested detailed cost analysis, including total cost of ownership, to optimize spending and to identify potential long-term savings. It also recommends transparent pricing models from vendors.
7. **Training and Skills Development:** Industry advocated for ongoing training and skill development for government personnel to build internal expertise in cloud technologies, which is essential for successful adoption and utilization of private cloud solutions.
8. **Governance and Oversight:** Industry suggested the establishment of clear governance structures and oversight mechanisms to manage cloud services and ensure alignment with broader IT and government policies is a recurring theme.
9. **Disaster Recovery and Business Continuity:** Industry highlighted the importance of implementing robust disaster recovery and business continuity measures within cloud solutions to safeguard against data loss and downtime is highlighted.
10. **Agile Procurement Practices:** Industry suggested the adoption of agile procurement practices to enable rapid decision-making and iterative development methodologies is frequently suggested.

Canada is committed to creating a fair and lasting procurement vehicle for Private Cloud. Canada intends to listen carefully to the feedback received, allowing it to help guide the procurement process and technical elements. Canada recognizes the importance of continuous engagement with Industry experts to ensure the best possible outcome.

8 What Canada Will Do

Industry has provided significant feedback on the procurement process and future considerations, providing Canada with factors to consider as it prepares the Private Cloud procurement strategy and solicitation documentation. Due consideration will be given to the risks and issues raised by Industry as we draft the initial solicitation documentation.

In addition, Canada will be using the Agile Procurement Process (APP3.0) for this solicitation. This approach clearly aligns with the desire expressed by Industry for vendor engagement and collaboration on the solicitation components and the proposed service delivery model.

As part of the APP3.0 process, Canada will provide Industry mechanisms to engage with Canada through 1:1 sessions, surveys and interactive webinars to provide feedback on the draft documents before the final solicitation is published. This will be done through a series of Invitation to Refine waves that will be guided by Rules of Engagement. In addition, Canada intends to create a flexible and evolving contract that adapts to changing needs over time while keeping pace with industry innovations. It is also Canada's desire to explore strategies to contribute to socio-economic and regional benefits.

In addition, Industry shared their expertise, insights, and recommendations on many technical aspects that were raised in the questionnaire. This feedback has provided Canada's technical team with important considerations as we develop the procurement strategy for the private cloud in relation

to Canada's holistic cloud strategy. It will also inform the configuration and structure of the contract and the drafting of the technical requirements.

In summary, many elements highlighted from the feedback received by Industry reflect the [GC's Cloud Adoption Strategy 2023](#). The strategy aims to explain how the GC will optimize its use of cloud to maximize business value, reduce accumulated technical debt, and continue to evolve a service-focused culture, all of which were highlighted by Industry.

Furthermore, the GC has evolved its Cloud Adoption Principles to further help align decisions and planning to the core outcomes desired by this strategy. The Cloud Adoption Principles are: 1) Cloud Smart, 2) Value First, 3) Cloud Security, 4) Incentivize Cloud, 5) Move & Continuously Improve, 6) Invest in Our Talent, and 7) Deliver with Agility.

GC organizations are increasingly leveraging cloud computing to seize the potential benefits of delivering agile, flexible and cost-effective IT services.

While the government is still in the early stages of adopting cloud services, it continues to enhance policies and tools to assist organizations with secure cloud adoption, processes, and best practices. The ongoing refinement of the GC Cloud Strategy, marked by fidelity and continuous calibration, is crucial for achieving [Canada's Digital Ambition](#) and reaching [Net-zero emissions by 2050](#).