

Remarks by Hon. Don Graves, Deputy Secretary, US Department of Commerce
at the Artificial Intelligence Risk Management Framework Launch
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As Prepared for Delivery

Good morning. Thank you all for being here.

It has only been 15 months since we kicked off the AI Risk Management Framework (AI RMF), and today, we're gathered here to announce its release. This was an enormous task that relied upon extensive community involvement, and the AI RMF's release today is nothing short of remarkable.

This voluntary Framework will help to develop and deploy AI in ways that enable organizations, the U.S., and other nations to enhance AI trustworthiness while managing risks based on our democratic values. It should help to accelerate AI innovation and growth while advancing – rather than restricting or damaging – civil rights, civil liberties, and equity.

AI's huge growth and potential to transform our economy and society have made this an urgent priority for NIST, the Commerce Department, and the nation. I'm amazed at the speed and extent of AI innovations just in the brief period between the initiation and the delivery of this Framework.

Like many of you, I am also struck by the enormity of the potential impacts – both positive and negative – that accompany these scientific, technological, and commercial advances.

The AI RMF comes not a moment too soon.

It also holds great promise. But I've been around businesses long enough to know that this Framework's true value will depend upon its actual use and whether it changes processes and culture. So, I want to focus on the prospects for putting the AI RMF into practice.

And I have questions – along with a challenge – that only you and others like you will be able to answer. I hope you'll take some time to reflect on them and share your feedback with us.

First, are the Framework and the associated materials that NIST has put together with the community's collaboration – like the companion Playbook – clear and complete enough to materially advance the way in which organizations manage AI risks?

How readily will smaller companies be able to put the Framework into practice? How can we make it more likely that they do? What will be their biggest challenges?

How helpful will the AI RMF be and how extensively will it be used throughout an enterprise, and by the designers, developers, deployers, evaluators, and users who transform AI promises into products and services? That includes not only the technical staff of organizations and their supply chain partners, but also C-Suite executives.

Will having this Framework help to level-set the global marketplace for AI products and services? For example, will it help companies who want to do business in the EU and elsewhere around the globe?

Will the Framework be incorporated into standards, guidelines, and practices that are adopted in the U.S. and around the world?

Ultimately, of course, the key question is whether the Framework and its use will lead to more trustworthy and responsible AI. NIST acknowledges that these are important questions and metrics. I'm glad that the AI RMF includes a section about its effectiveness.

To quote directly, "Organizations and other users of the Framework are encouraged to periodically evaluate whether the AI RMF has improved their ability to manage AI risks, including but not limited to their policies, processes, practices, implementation plans, indicators, measurements, and expected outcomes."

The Framework also notes that evaluations of AI RMF effectiveness – including ways to measure bottom-line improvements in the trustworthiness of AI systems – will be part of future NIST activities, in conjunction with the AI community.

And I fully support NIST's pledge that the agency will work collaboratively with others to develop metrics, methodologies, and goals for evaluating the AI RMF's effectiveness, and to broadly share results and supporting information.

I'm already encouraged both by the broad community's involvement in developing the Framework, and by the initial statements from a range of organizations committing to use and promote the Framework. Those of you here today – including those on livestream – represent businesses, civil society, government agencies, and academia.

We're counting on your continued engagement and involvement to advance trustworthy and responsible AI. The strength and quality of our economy and society depends on it.

So, thank you for being here today, and thank you for continuing to engage with us in the weeks and months ahead.