

# OSAI: Differentiation Note for Canonical Reference Identity and Downstream Agent Systems

Technical Companion Artifact

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**Scope:** Conceptual, non-operational differentiation note distinguishing OSAI canonical reference identity from downstream authentication, authorization, protocol, certification, runtime-control, and procurement-adjacent systems.  
**Companion Artifacts:** [OSAI-FW-MEM-01](#); [OSAI-FW-GRM-01](#); [OSAI-FW-SCH-01](#); [OSAI-FW-RSL-01](#); [OSAI-FW-DMO-01](#); [OSAI-FW-REL-01](#); [OSAI-FW-RO-02](#); [OSAI-FW-L2-DC-01](#)

## 1) Purpose

This document clarifies the narrow OSAI lane after review of adjacent agent-identity, authorization, protocol, attestation, certification, and runtime-control activity. Its purpose is to distinguish OSAI canonical reference identity from downstream systems that authenticate, authorize, enforce, certify, govern, monitor, or execute agents.

This document does not evaluate competing systems, rank standards efforts, or define implementation requirements. It states a boundary position for the OSAI bridge artifact family.

## 2) Core Distinction

OSAI defines canonical reference identity records that downstream systems may cite.

OSAI does not decide who or what can access a resource, issue credentials, enforce policy, certify behavior, govern runtime action, provide security controls, or operate as a live central registry.

The core distinction is reference before control: a subject should be nameable and distinguishable before downstream systems bind authority, attestation, delegation, audit evidence, or enforcement decisions to that subject.

## 3) Differentiation Map

Adjacent Lane	Primary Function	OSAI Boundary
IAM / enterprise identity systems	Manage identities, roles, access, and organizational control policies.	OSAI provides canonical reference identity records that IAM systems may cite.
OAuth / OIDC / OpenID profiles	Carry authentication, authorization, federation, token exchange, and delegated access flows.	OSAI is not an OAuth/OIDC competitor and does not issue tokens or scopes.
SPIFFE / SPIRE and workload identity	Identify workloads and support service-to-service identity in runtime environments.	OSAI is an upstream reference layer and does not replace workload identity infrastructure.
MCP / A2A / WebMCP-style protocols	Coordinate agent-tool or agent-agent interactions and protocol metadata.	OSAI is protocol-agnostic and may be represented as metadata without becoming a tool-call protocol.
Pre-action authorization / passport-like systems	May package authorization, policy, receipts, or action constraints for agent behavior.	OSAI should not use Agent Passport or AI Passport as a core artifact name and does not provide pre-action authorization.
Cryptographic proof / signed receipts / attestation stacks	Provide evidence, signatures, receipts, cryptographic proofs, or runtime	OSAI permits attestation references but does not become the proof engine.

	attestations.	
Cloud runtime security and containment	Apply IAM, least privilege, observability, runtime containment, and infrastructure controls.	OSAI remains portable across cloud runtimes and does not provide runtime security controls.
Certification / accountability programs	Evaluate, certify, review, or attest to safety, compliance, or accountability claims.	OSAI records may be cited by reviewers but OSAI does not certify agents.
Procurement factsheets / audit artifacts	Document permissions, data dependencies, action catalogs, rollback, and logging.	OSAI can provide a stable reference anchor for such artifacts without becoming a procurement artifact itself.

#### 4) Terms to Use and Avoid

Preferred OSAI terms include canonical reference identity, OSAI ID, Canonical Identity Record, Authority Binding Record, Attestation Record, Resolver Illustration, Narrow Demonstration, Companion Technical Artifacts, and linked reference artifacts.

Terms requiring caution include agent identity, provenance, attestation, verification, assurance, registry, compliance, evidence, and audit. These terms should be used only where the document preserves separation from downstream operational functions.

Terms to avoid as core OSAI artifact language include AI Passport, Agent Passport, trust fabric, governance platform, certification, control plane, runtime enforcement, security platform, policy engine, permission slip, authorization framework, agent marketplace, and live registry operator.

#### 5) Non-Claim Boundary

An OSAI identity record does not certify that an agent is safe, authorized, reliable, governable, compliant, or suitable for autonomous deployment.

An attestation reference does not constitute certification by OSAI. An authority binding record does not constitute a live access grant. Resolver output does not determine authorization, trust, compliance, or runtime suitability.

#### 6) Relationship to Companion Artifacts

The Grammar artifact defines the OSAI ID structure. The Schema artifact defines the three-record model. The Resolver Illustration shows lookup-only retrieval posture. The Narrow Demonstration shows stable identity with changing authority. This Differentiation Note explains what those artifacts do not claim and what downstream systems remain responsible for.

#### 7) Release Use

This note should accompany or precede public release of the Technical Concept Note if the TCN references agent identity, schema, resolver behavior, or companion technical artifacts. Its purpose is to reduce category collision and overread risk by making the OSAI lane explicit.

#### References

##### [OSAI-FW-MEM-01](#)

OSAI: A Neutral Naming and Reference Substrate for Software and AI Agents Standards-Facing Memo (Public), v1.0, issued March 5, 2026.  
<https://www.InfrastructureOSAI.com/assets/OSAI-FW-MEM-01.pdf>

##### [OSAI-FW-GRM-01](#)

OSAI: Canonical Identifier Grammar for Software and AI Agents Issued Companion Technical Artifact, v1.0, issued May 7, 2026.  
<https://www.InfrastructureOSAI.com/assets/OSAI-FW-GRM-01.pdf>

##### [OSAI-FW-SCH-01](#)

OSAI: Three-Record Schema Template Pack for Software and AI Agents Issued Companion Technical Artifact, v1.0, issued May 7, 2026.

<https://www.InfrastructureOSAI.com/assets/OSAI-FW-SCH-01.pdf>

[OSAI-FW-RSL-01](#)

OSAI: Minimal Resolver Illustration for Software and AI Agents  
Issued Companion Technical Artifact, v1.0, issued May 7, 2026.  
<https://www.InfrastructureOSAI.com/assets/OSAI-FW-RSL-01.pdf>

[OSAI-FW-DMO-01](#)

OSAI: Narrow Demonstration of Stable Identity with Changing Authority  
Issued Companion Technical Artifact, v1.0, issued May 7, 2026.  
<https://www.InfrastructureOSAI.com/assets/OSAI-FW-DMO-01.pdf>

[OSAI-FW-REL-01](#)

OSAI: Companion Artifact Index and Release Note  
Issued Release Coordination Artifact, v1.0, issued May 7, 2026.  
<https://www.InfrastructureOSAI.com/assets/OSAI-FW-REL-01.pdf>

[OSAI-FW-RO-02](#)

Reader's Orientation  
Issued public artifact.  
<https://www.InfrastructureOSAI.com/assets/OSAI-FW-RO-02.pdf>

[OSAI-FW-L2-DC-01](#)

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