Recommendation ITU-T Y.3539 (01/2023)

SERIES Y: Global information infrastructure, Internet protocol aspects, next-generation networks, Internet of Things and smart cities

Cloud Computing

Cloud computing – Framework of risk management



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For further details, please refer to the list of ITU-T Recommendations.

Recommendation ITU-T Y.3539

Cloud computing – Framework of risk management

Summary

Recommendation ITU-T Y.3539 provides a framework of risk management in a cloud computing environment, including risk assessment, risk treatment, risk acceptance, risk communication and consultation, and risk monitoring and review. It also provides a complete set of management processes and effective measures to reduce risks in the cloud computing environments.

History				
Edition	Recommendation	Approval	Study Group	Unique ID*
1.0	ITU-T Y.3539	2023-01-13	13	11.1002/1000/15241

Keywords

Cloud computing, risk assessment, risk management, risk treatment.

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^{*} To access the Recommendation, type the URL http://handle.itu.int/ in the address field of your web browser, followed by the Recommendation's unique ID. For example, <u>http://handle.itu.int/11.1002/1000/11</u> <u>830-en</u>.

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Recommendation ITU-T Y.3539

Cloud computing – Framework of risk management

1 Scope

This Recommendation provides an overview of and framework for risk management in the cloud computing environment. It focuses on the risk management processes of a cloud service provider (CSP) by addressing the following subjects:

- Overview and framework of risk management in a cloud computing environment;
- Risk assessment in a cloud computing environment;
- Risk treatment in a cloud computing environment.

2 References

The following ITU-T Recommendations and other references contain provisions which, through reference in this text, constitute provisions of this Recommendation. At the time of publication, the editions indicated were valid. All Recommendations and other references are subject to revision; users of this Recommendation are therefore encouraged to investigate the possibility of applying the most recent edition of the Recommendations and other references listed below. A list of the currently valid ITU-T Recommendations is regularly published. The reference to a document within this Recommendation does not give it, as a stand-alone document, the status of a Recommendation.

[ISO/IEC 27005] ISO/IEC 27005:2022, Information security, cybersecurity and privacy protection – Guidance on managing information security risks.

3 Definitions

3.1 Terms defined elsewhere

This Recommendation uses the following terms defined elsewhere:

3.1.1 cloud computing [b-ITU-T Y.3500]: Paradigm for enabling network access to a scalable and elastic pool of shareable physical or virtual resources with self-service provisioning and administration on-demand.

NOTE – Examples of resources include servers, operating systems, networks, software, applications, and storage equipment.

3.1.2 cloud service provider [b-ITU-T Y.3500]: Party which makes cloud services available.

3.1.3 cloud service customer [b-ITU-T Y.3500]: Party which is in a business relationship for the purpose of using cloud services.

NOTE – A business relationship does not necessarily imply financial agreements.

3.1.4 threat [b-ISO/IEC 27000]: Potential cause of an unwanted incident, which may result in harm to a system or organization.

3.1.5 vulnerability [b-ISO/IEC 27000]: Weakness of an asset or control that can be exploited by one or more threats.

3.1.6 risk [b-ISO/IEC 27000]: Effect of uncertainty on objectives.

3.1.7 risk assessment [b-ISO/IEC 27000]: Overall process of risk identification, risk and risk evaluation.

3.1.8 risk management [b-ISO/IEC 27000]: Coordinated activities to direct and control an organization with regard to risk.

3.1.9 risk treatment [b-ISO/IEC 27000]: Process to modify risk.

3.2 Terms defined in this Recommendation

None.

4 Abbreviations and acronyms

This Recommendation uses the following abbreviations and acronyms:

- CSC Cloud Service Customer
- CSP Cloud Service Provider
- CVE Collaborative Virtual Environment
- DMZ Demilitarized Zone
- NaaS Network as a Service
- SQL Structured Query Language
- XSS Cross-Site Scripting

5 Conventions

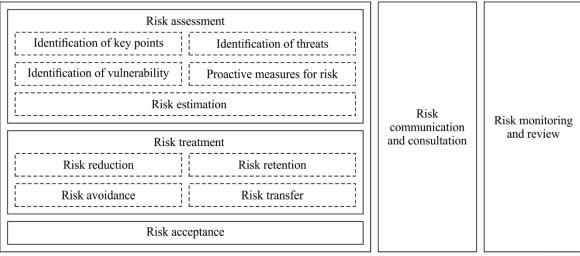
The keywords "**is required to**" indicate a requirement which must be strictly followed and from which no deviation is permitted if conformance to this Recommendation is to be claimed.

In the body of this Recommendation and its annexes, the words should and may sometimes appear, in which case they are to be interpreted, respectively, as is recommended and can optionally. The appearance of such phrases or keywords in an appendix or in material explicitly marked as informative is to be interpreted as having no normative intent.

6 Overview and framework of risk management in the cloud computing environment

With the rapid development of cloud computing, risk management has become increasingly important. In the actual production environment, network instability, equipment failure and other problems are inevitable. There are several potential risks associated with the life cycle of cloud services.

It is required that the CSP provide the following: cloud service security and risk manager with a complete set of processes for risk management and effective measures to reduce risks. The framework of risk management in the cloud computing environment provides management capabilities as shown in Figure 6-1. These management capabilities are based on the procedure described in [ISO/IEC 27005], specifically relating to the cloud computing environment aspect.



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Figure 6-1 – Framework of risk management in the cloud computing environment

- Risk assessment: management capability for identifying and estimating risks in the cloud computing environment.
- Risk treatment: management capability for taking measures to keep risk within an acceptable range based on the results of a risk assessment, including risk reduction, risk retention, risk avoidance and risk transfer, which is presented in clause 8.
- Risk acceptance: management capability for accepting residual risks when the risk acceptance criteria are met. The following factors should be considered criteria:
 - Accepting a residual risk that leads to a small loss.

NOTE 1 - Residual risk will not affect the cloud service in some cases, such as with some system vulnerabilities created by useless components. If the influence is small based on the risk evaluation, then the residual risk can be accepted.

• When a key point has a risk that cannot be resolved, this risk is acceptable if the key point can bring very high benefits for the CSP.

NOTE 2 – Some key points may bring risks and benefits simultaneously. For example, using open source components in cloud service may bring risks such as licence infringement and open source security incidents. Open source components could also bring benefits such as cost decreasing or rapid technology iteration. If the key point brings many more benefits then risks, it can be accepted.

- Accepting the risk when the CSP cannot afford to reduce it.
- Risk communication and consultation: management capability for timely informing the cloud service customers (CSCs) of security risk events, including but not limited to:
 - Vulnerabilities that could threaten data and applications in cloud services;
 - Major changes of cloud services or CSP;
 - Security events that have occurred, such as data loss and data breach.
- Risk monitoring and review: management capability for intelligently paying timely attention to any security warning notices, vulnerability notices and other threat notices and generating a risk report on a regular basis for regulatory review.

7 Risk assessment in the cloud computing environment

7.1 Identification of key points

Risk management in the cloud computing environment involves many key points, including infrastructure, network resource, computing resource, storage resource, application, data, human factor and operation management. Categories and examples are shown in Table 7-1.

Category	Example
Infrastructure	 Power Air conditioning
Network resource	Network equipmentNetwork architecture
Computing resource	 Physical server Virtual host
Storage resource	Storage equipmentStorage architecture
Application	Service portal
Data	User dataSystem data
Human factor	CSP: cloud service operations manager
Operation management	Cloud service life cycle managementEmergency response management
Shared responsibility	Responsibilities of CSPResponsibilities of CSC

Table 7-1 – The key points for risk management in the cloud computing environment

The key points in the cloud computing environment should be valued based on the degree of impact. Table I.1 provides the reference weights for different levels in risk management in the cloud computing environment.

7.2 Identification of threats

Threat is a possible factor that can cause potential damage to the cloud computing environment and exists objectively. The causes of threats include environmental factors, technical failures and human factors. Categories and descriptions of threats are shown in Table 7-2.

Category	Description
Environmental factors	Environmental conditions and natural disasters such as: Outage Static electricity Dust Moist Temperature Flood Fire
	• Earthquake

Table 7-2 –	Threat	classification
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С	ategory	Description
Technical failures		Hardware failures
		Cloud service software vulnerability
		Hacker attack
		System intrusion
	Outsider threats	Unauthorized system access
Human factors		System tampering
		Information eavesdropping
	Lesiden thusata	Misoperation
	Insider threats	Malicious behaviour

Table 7-2 – Threat classification

Estimating the frequency of threats is an important work of threat identification. The threat frequency can be divided into multiple levels representing different number of times threats are realised. The higher the level, the higher the frequency of the threats, and the greater the risky impact in the cloud computing environment. Table II.1 provides the reference levels and descriptions of threat frequency in the cloud computing environment.

7.3 Identification of vulnerability

Vulnerability identification methods include questionnaire surveys, tool detection, manual verification, log review and penetration testing.

Vulnerability is identified based on the key points for risk management in the cloud computing environment and corresponds to CSPs' measures for risk. For those systems with strong proactive measures for risk, the vulnerability is often low or does not exist.

7.4 **Proactive measures for risk**

7.4.1 Infrastructure risk

Proactive measures for infrastructure risk include:

- **Power redundancy** the ability to resist power accidents, including data centre power redundancy, transformer redundancy, backup diesel generator redundancy and uninterruptible power supply system configuration redundancy.
- **Air conditioning redundancy** the ability to resist air conditioning accidents, including chiller and cooling pump redundancy.
- **Reliability of building** the ability to resist emergencies, including data centre seismic, fire, waterproof and antistatic level.
- **Entrance limitation** the ability to use access control and video surveillance to ensure physical security.
- **Fire protection** the ability to resist fire accidents, including through use of an automatic fire extinguishing system and fire alarm system.
- **Backup data centre** the ability to deploy cloud services in active-standby data centres to maintain service continuation.

7.4.2 Network resource risk

Proactive measures for network resource risk include:

• **Network redundancy** – the ability of the redundancy of the NaaS CSP's network devices and network links.

• **Network isolation** – the ability of the division of the NaaS CSP's network security domain and network isolation for multitenant.

NOTE 1 - The network security domain includes the production domain, operation and maintenance management domain, office domain, DMZ domain and Internet domain.

- Access control the ability to deploy access control mechanisms and setting of access control rules at the boundaries of different network domains.
- **Attack defence** the ability of monitoring network attack behaviour, recording the attack type, attack time, attack traffic and so on, and taking corresponding defensive measures.
- **Invasion defence** the ability of detecting network intrusion behaviour, recording the information of intrusion behaviour and taking the corresponding defensive measures.

NOTE 2 – Intrusion behaviour includes port scanning, SQL injection, command execution, code injection and XSS cross-site attack.

• **Cable protection** – the ability to use certain security measures to protect the NaaS CSP's cables.

7.4.3 Computing resource risk

Proactive measures for computing resource risk include:

- **Computing resource redundancy** the ability to ensure the CSP's computing resource redundancy, including the design of high availability of computing resources, dual-machine hot backup, etc.
- **Vulnerability management** the ability to scan and repair high-risk vulnerabilities, including the vulnerabilities in the collaborative virtual environment (CVE) and other public vulnerability databases, system software vulnerabilities and other high-risk vulnerabilities.
- **Baseline check** the ability to check on the physical server, virtual host, system software and so on, including the CSC account security check, weak password check, configuration risk check, port status check and process status check.
- **Virus management** the ability to check and kill viruses, including website backdoors and Trojan horses.

7.4.4 Storage resource risk

Proactive measures for storage resource risk include:

- **Storage redundancy** the ability to ensure the CSP's storage redundancy in case of system or hardware failure.
- **Data backup strategy** the ability to take appropriate strategies to back up the data, including full copy and erasure code copy.

7.4.5 Application risk

Proactive measures for application risk include:

- Web vulnerability management the ability to scan and fix web vulnerability, including injection vulnerabilities, cross-site script vulnerabilities, invalid identity authentication and session management, unsafe direct object references, security configuration errors, sensitive information leaks, cross-site request forgery, components containing known vulnerabilities, unverified redirection and forwarding.
- Web protection management the ability to have defence systems for web application.
- **Account security management** the ability to check the security of CSCs' accounts, including weak password checking, anti-violence cracking and antimalicious registration.

7.4.6 Data risk

Proactive measures for data risk include:

- **Data persistence management** the ability to take control measures to ensure there is no data lost, such as by making data tamper-proof.
- **Data availability management** the ability to take control measures to ensure the normal use of data.
- **Data confidentiality management** the ability to keep data confidential, including through data isolation and data encryption.

7.4.7 Operation risk

Proactive measures for operation risk includes:

- **Monitoring ability** the ability to monitor all hardware and systems which carry cloud services, including power environment monitoring, physical equipment monitoring, network traffic monitoring, database monitoring and application monitoring and to represent results from a visual monitoring platform.
- **Alarm management** the ability to provide alarm content management, fault detection and processing.
- **Authority management** the ability to manage the authority of operation and maintenance personnel, including account management, authentication management, authority management and audit management.
- **Log management** the ability to carry out log recording and log audit, including through user access logs, operation and maintenance personnel operation logs and system logs.
- **Asset management** the ability to manage the software and hardware information assets related to cloud services, including information collection, asset change management and statistical reports.
- **Billing management** the ability to carry out accurate billing, including implementing billing rule settings and billing item configuration.
- **Operation tool management** the ability to approve, control and monitor the use of information system maintenance tools.

7.4.8 Shared responsibility risk

Proactive measures for shared responsibility risk include:

- **Division of security responsibilities** the ability to clarify the responsibilities of the CSC and the different roles of CSP.
- **Notification of responsibilities** the ability to inform the CSC in advance of risk events that are not covered by the CSP.

7.5 Risk estimation

After identifying key points, threats, vulnerabilities and proactive measures for risk in the cloud computing environment, the risk value is obtained by combining key point weight, threat frequency level and the coefficient of proactive measures. Appendix IV and Appendix V demonstrate the mapping of the key points, threats and proactive measures, among other things.

Once the proactive measures for risk in clause 7.4 are in place, the corresponding coefficient is 0; otherwise, it is 1. The specific formula is given in Appendix III.

8 Risk treatment in the cloud computing environment

Based on the results of risk assessment, the risk treatment is selected, whose procedure is presented in Figure 8-1.

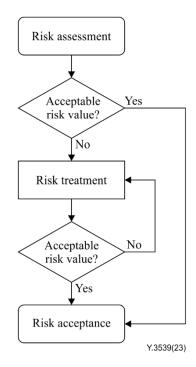


Figure 8-1 – Risk treatment process in the cloud computing environment

8.1 Risk reduction

Risk reduction refers to the ability to reduce the risk level through relevant selection control measures and tp enable the residual risk to reach an acceptable level when it is assessed again. Control measures include:

- Optimizing management system, including objectives, roles, responsibilities and processes.
- Repairing software and hardware defects.
- Introducing advanced technologies and tools in risk management in the cloud computing environment, such as automated monitoring systems and intelligent analysis systems.

When selecting control measures, the cost of acquiring, implementing, managing, operating, monitoring and maintaining control measures should be weighed against the value of key points for risk management in the cloud computing environment.

8.2 Risk retention

Risk retention refers to the ability to make the decision of not taking further risk preservation steps based on the risk assessment. If the risk level meets the risk acceptance criteria, then there is no need to implement additional control measures and the risk can be retained.

8.3 Risk avoidance

Risk avoidance refers to the ability to avoid activities or conditions that cause specific risks. When the identified risk is considered too high or the cost of other risk treatment options exceeds the threshold, the planned or existing activities should be withdrawn to avoid risks.

The above activities refer to changes made by CSP related with key points for risk management, such as storage architecture adjustments and large-scale data migrations.

8.4 Risk transfer

Risk transfer refers to the ability to transfer the risk to another party who can effectively manage the specific risk. The typical approach is to buy insurance that covers cloud service outages, data loss and cyberattacks.

NOTE – Risk transfer may generate new risks or change existing risks.

Appendix I

Key point weight for risk management in the cloud computing environment

(This appendix does not form an integral part of this Recommendation.)

Table I.1 shows key point weights for different levels in risk management in the cloud computing environment.

Table I.1 – Key point weights for different levels in risk management in the cloud computing environment

Weight	Identification	Description
3	High	Significantly important, it may cause very serious damage to cloud services
2	Medium	Moderately important, it may cause moderate loss to cloud services.
1	Low	Less important, it may cause less loss to cloud services.

Appendix II

Threat frequency in the cloud computing environment

(This appendix does not form an integral part of this Recommendation.)

Table II.1 shows level and description of threat frequency in the cloud computing environment.

 Table II.1 – Level for threat frequency in the cloud computing environment

Level	Identification	Description
3	High	Frequency of threats which will inevitably happen in most cases or can be proved to happen often.
2	Medium	Frequency of threats which may occur in some cases or be proven to have happened.
1	Low	Frequency of threats which are generally unlikely and have not been proven to happen.

Appendix III

The formula of risk estimation

(This appendix does not form an integral part of this Recommendation.)

The following formula shows the equation of risk value estimation.

 $Risk \ value = \sum Proactive \ measure \ coefficient \ * \ Key \ point \ weight \ * \ Threat \ frequency$

For example, user data is very important, so its weight is 3. When CSP suffers from frequent theft of user data, its threat frequency is 3. If a CSP has no protection measures for this threat, then the proactive measure coefficient is 1, and the current risk value is 9 based on the above formula.

Appendix IV

Mapping of threats and key points for risk management in the cloud computing environment

(This appendix does not form an integral part of this Recommendation.)

Table IV.1 shows a mapping of threats and key points for risk management in the cloud computing environment.

The letter 'Y' in a cell formed by the intersection of the table rows and columns designates that a particular threat for cloud service is addressed by a corresponding key point for risk management in the cloud computing environment.

										Identif	ication of th	reats								
					E								Human factors							
	Risk assessment		Environmental factors							Technical failures					Insider threats					
		Outage	Static electricity	Dust	Moisture	Temperature	Flood	Fire	Earthquake	Hardware failures	Cloud service software vulnerability	attack		Unauthorized		Information eavesdropping	Misoperation	Malicious behaviour		
	Infrastructure	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		_				_		—			
	Network resource		_	_	_		—		_	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	_	_		
	Computing resource	_	—	_	_	_	—	_	—	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	_	_		
Identification	Storage resource	_	—	_	_	_	_		_	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	_	_		
of key points	Application	_	—	_	_	_	_		_		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	_	_		
	Data	_	_	_	_	_	_		_	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		_		
	Human factor	_		_	_		_		_		_	_	_				Y	Y		
	Operation	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		

Table IV.1 – Mapping of threats and k	• 4 • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • •	• 41 1 1 4• • 4
I anie IV I – Wanning of threats and k	'ev naints far risk management i	in the cloud computing environment
$1 a \mu \alpha 1 \gamma 1 = \mu \alpha \mu \mu \alpha \beta \alpha \alpha \alpha \beta \alpha \alpha \alpha \alpha \beta \alpha \alpha \alpha \alpha \beta \alpha \alpha \alpha \beta \alpha \alpha \alpha \beta \alpha \alpha \alpha \beta \alpha \alpha \beta \alpha \alpha \beta $	cy points for fisk management	

Table IV.1 – Mapping of threats and key points for risk management in the cloud computing environment

		Identification of threats															
				montal factors		Technical failures		Human factors									
	Risk assessment		Environmental factors					recinical failures		Outsider threats				Insider threats			
		Outage	Static electricity	Dust Mo	isture	Temperature Flood	Fire	Earthquake	Tailures		attack		Unauthorized system access		Information eavesdropping		Malicious behaviour
	Shared responsibility	_	_				_				Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	_	_

Appendix V

Mapping of threats and proactive measures for risk in the cloud computing environment

(This appendix does not form an integral part of this Recommendation.)

Table V.1 shows a mapping of threats and proactive measures for risk in the cloud computing environment.

The letter 'Y' in a cell formed by the intersection of the table rows and columns designates that a particular threat for cloud service is addressed by a corresponding proactive measure for risk.

Table V.1 – Mapping of threats and proactive measures for risk in the cloud	computing environment
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											Ident	tification of t	hreats						
						Environm	nental factor	rs			Technie	cal failures	Human factors						
	Risk assessment			Static electricity	Dust	Moisture	Femperature	Flood	Fire	Earthquake	Hardware failures	Cloud service software vulnerability	attack	System intrusion	Outsider the Unauthorized system access	System	Information eavesdropping	Insider t	
		Power redundancy	Y	_	_	_	_	_	_	_			_	_					_
		Air conditioning redundancy	_			Y	Y					_			_				_
Proactive		Reliability of building		Y	Y		_	Y	Y	Y		_		_		_			_
measures for risk	Infrastructure risk	Entrance limitation	_		_		_							_					Y
		Fire protection	_	_	_		_		Y					_		_			_
		Backup data centre	Y	_	_	_	_	Y	Y	Y								_	_

										Iden	tification of t	hreats									
						Environ	mental factor	10			Taabni	cal failures	Human factors								
					-	Environ	mental factor		6	1	Technic			1	Insider threats						
	Risk assessment			Static electricity	Dust	Moisture	eTemperature	Flood	Fire	Earthquake	Hardware failures	Cloud service software vulnerability	Hacker attack	System	Unauthorized system access	System tampering	Information eavesdropping	Misoperatio	n Malicious behaviour		
		Network redundancy	Y			_	_			_	Y	Y	_	_	_			_	_		
		Network isolation	Y				_			_	Y	Y	_	_			_	_	_		
	Network resource risk	Access control	_			_	_			_	_	_	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	_	_		
		Attack defence				_	_			_		Y	Y					_	_		
		Invasion defence				_	_	_		_		Y		Y	Y	Y	Y	_	_		
		Cable protection				_	_	Y	Y	Y			_	_	_			_	_		
		Computing resource redundancy	_			_	_			_	Y	_	_	_			_	_	_		
		Vulnerability management				_	_			_	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	_	_		
	Computing resource risk	Baseline check	_			_				_	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		
		Virus management					_			_			Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	_	_		

Table V.1 – Mapping of threats and proactive measures for risk in the cloud computing environment

										threats								
					Environ	mental facto	*0			Taabni	cal failures							
			1		Environ	mental facto	15			Technic	cal famures		1	Insider	threats			
Risk assessn	Outage	Static electrici	ty Dust	Moisture	Temperature	Flood	l Fire	Earthquake	Hardware failures	Cloud service software vulnerability	attack	System Un intrusion sys	nauthorized stem access	System tampering	Information eavesdropping	Misoperatior	Malicious behaviour	
Storage	Storage devices redundancy			_		_		_	_	Y	Y	_	_	_		_		_
resource risk	Data backup strategy	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
	Web vulnerability management		_	_		_		_	_	_	Y		_	_	_	_	_	_
Application risk	Web protection management			_		_	_	_	_	_		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	_	_
	Account security management		_	_		_		_	_	_		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
	Data persistence management			_		_	_	_	_	Y	Y		_	_	_			_
Data risk	Data availability management			_		_	_	_	_	Y	Y		_	_				_
	Data confidentiality management	_	_	_			_	_	_			Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	_	_
	Monitoring ability	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		_	_	_		Y	Y
Operation risk	Alarm management	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		_	_	_		Y	Y
	Authority management		_	_		_	_	_	_	_		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

Table V.1 – Mapping of threats and proactive measures for risk in the cloud computing environment

		Identification of threats																
				Environ	mental factor	rs			Techni	cal failures	Human factors Outsider threats Insider t							
Risk assessment			Static electricity	Dust	Moisture	Temperature	Flood	Fire	Earthquake	Hardware failures	Cloud service software vulnerability	attack	System			Information eavesdropping	Misoperation	Malicious behaviour
	Log management	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	_	_				Y	Y
	Asset management	_	_			_	_	_	_	Y	Y	_	_				_	_
	Billing management	_		_		—	_		_				_	_			Y	Y
	Operation and maintenance tool management		_			_	_		_				_				Y	Y
Shared	Division of security responsibilities		_				_		_			Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	_	_
responsibility risk	Notification of responsibilities	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	_	_

Table V.1 – Mapping of threats and proactive measures for risk in the cloud computing environment

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