

9.3 Competition and Provider Substitution

[Return to Operating Model](#)

The [cost_recovery_compensation_and_settlement_plane](#) supports competition among qualified Nodes and qualified service providers. Competition applies only where providers perform equivalent governed work under equivalent obligations.

A substitute [node](#) needs the same applicable interface, semantic model, policy obligation, evidence requirement, security requirement, residency constraint, sovereignty constraint, operational expectation, and service-level context as the Node it replaces.

This model supports lower-cost compliant processing without rewarding under-compliance. A lower-cost provider has architectural value only when the provider performs the required governed work and supplies the required evidence.

Competitive Substitution also supports resilience and procurement flexibility. The architecture can compare qualified implementations on cost, service level, jurisdictional eligibility, evidence quality, operational performance, and settlement context.

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