Rules as Code Discovery Project

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This is a summary of a presentation for a Rules as Code Discovery Project, a collaborative project between various government departments and their partners.

Building on the idea of using encoded rules in electronic tax filing services to simplify the submission of income tax, if governments published more rules in a structured and open format, then this could be an authoritative source for digital services.

Focuses on **Sections 12 and 13** of the Canada Labour Standards Regulations, which details vacation pay entitlements to eligible employees.

Objectives

- Experience the RaC process in the Canadian Government context
- Begin testing whether RaC produces better rules

This was a collaborative project between various government organizations (ESDC, Department of Justice, Canada School of Public Service) and HabitatSeven, a leading data and infrastructure firm in the RaC space.

The project involved building a concept model collaboratively with subject-matter experts by identifying and relating key concepts in the regulation. From this model a decision tree could be built, followed by the actual coding and prototype development.

Key Insights

- Converting written rules to RaC is a collaborative process between technologists and subject-matter experts.
- RaC is best-suited to prescriptive rulesets

- A huge benefit is bridging the gap between how rules are written and how they are implemented

Application to a Policy Difference Engine

This work creates strong momentum in the Rules as Code space, especially within the context of the Canadian Government. Certain aspects of the **PDE**, such as the client module, will rely heavily on Rules as Code.

There is a possibility of using this valuable work as a model for translating other written rules. It may also be possible to directly build on this work and create a tool that can be used directly by rule writers to measure some concrete impacts of changing this particular policy.