



# The Biggest Mistakes You Can Make

Why defense contractors who are waiting  
to comply with CMMC will miss out on  
DoD contracts in 2025 and beyond





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# The Biggest Mistake You Can Make

Why defense contractors who are waiting to comply with CMMC will miss out on DoD contracts in 2025 and beyond

JACOB HORNE | 03.13.2025





# Agenda

- 01** CMMC 101
- 02** Timeline & “Phased Roll-Out”
- 03** CMMC Levels & Waivers
- 04** CMMC Assessment Readiness Lead Time
- 05** Procurement Administrative Lead Time
- 06** Key Takeaways
- 07** Q&A

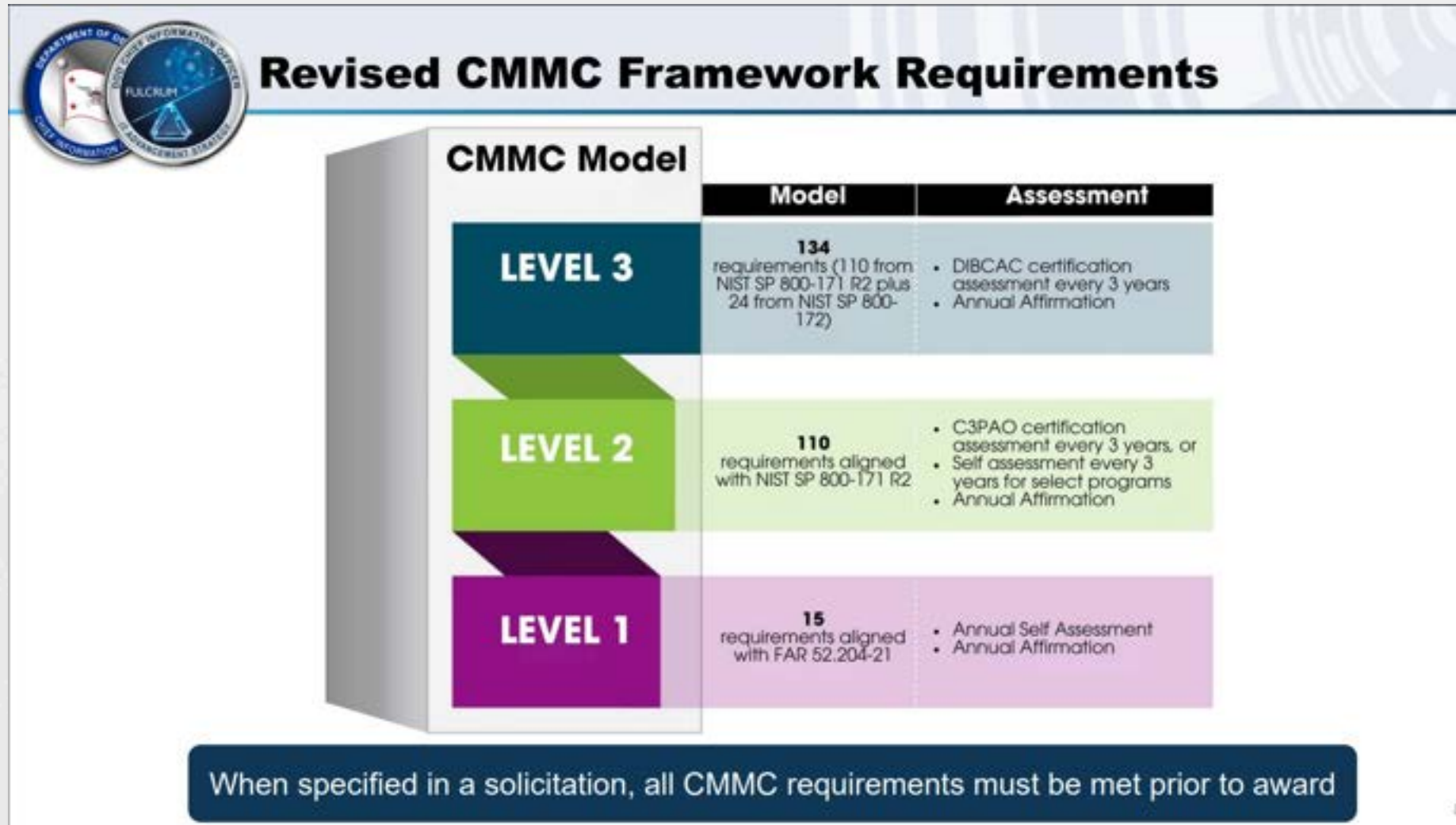


# CMMC 101

How hard could it be?

# When defense contractors handle covered data, they have cybersecurity requirements to protect that data

CMMC is a program that verifies if those requirements have been implemented





CMMC isn't making you *do*  
the requirements.

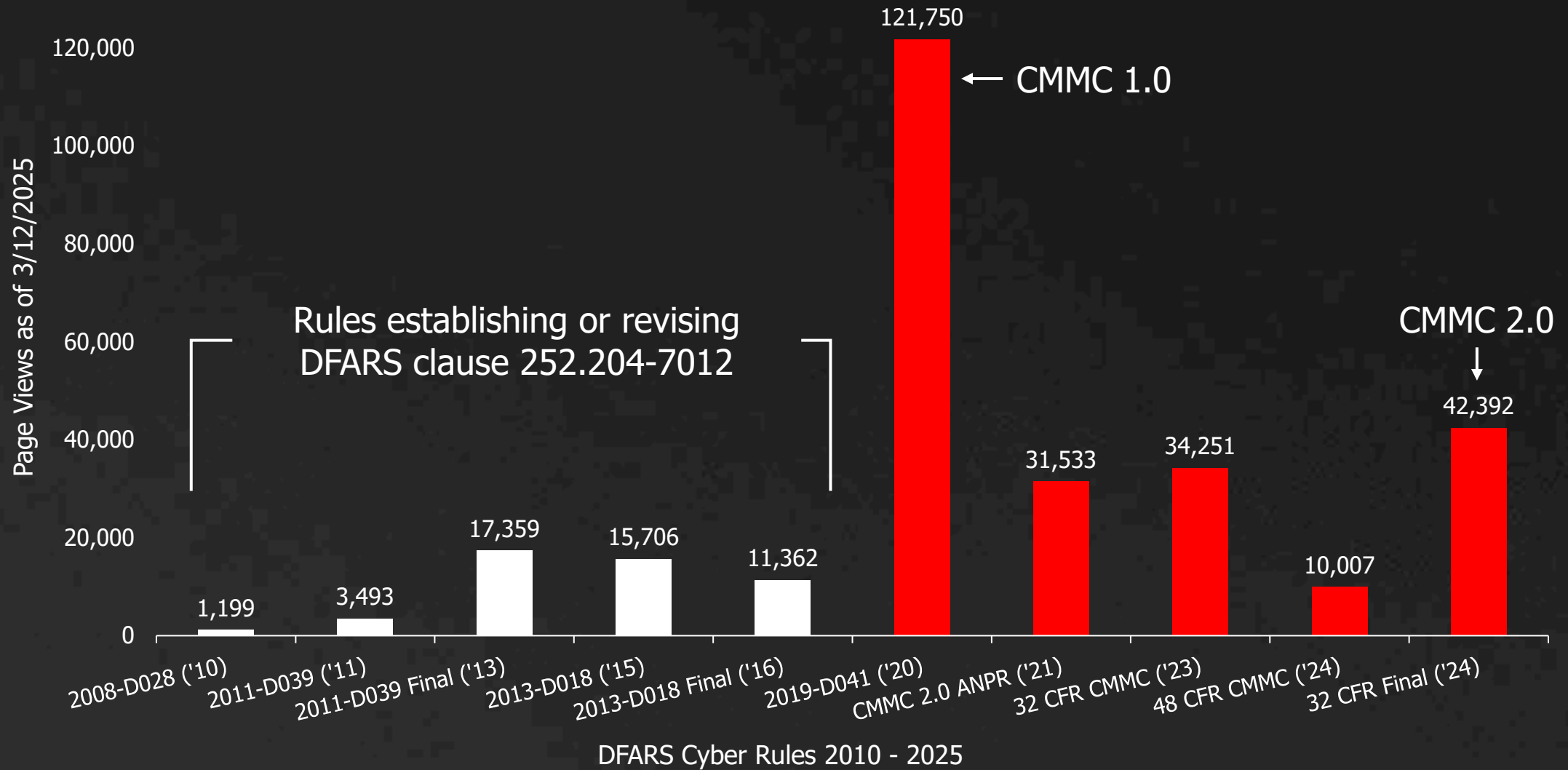
CMMC is making sure *you did*  
the requirements.

**-Jacob Horne, Chief Cybersecurity  
Evangelist**

# CMMC rules are read 5x more than DFARS 252.204-7012 rules

Failure to comply with existing requirements is why CMMC exists in the first place

Federal Register Page Views vs DFARS Rulemaking





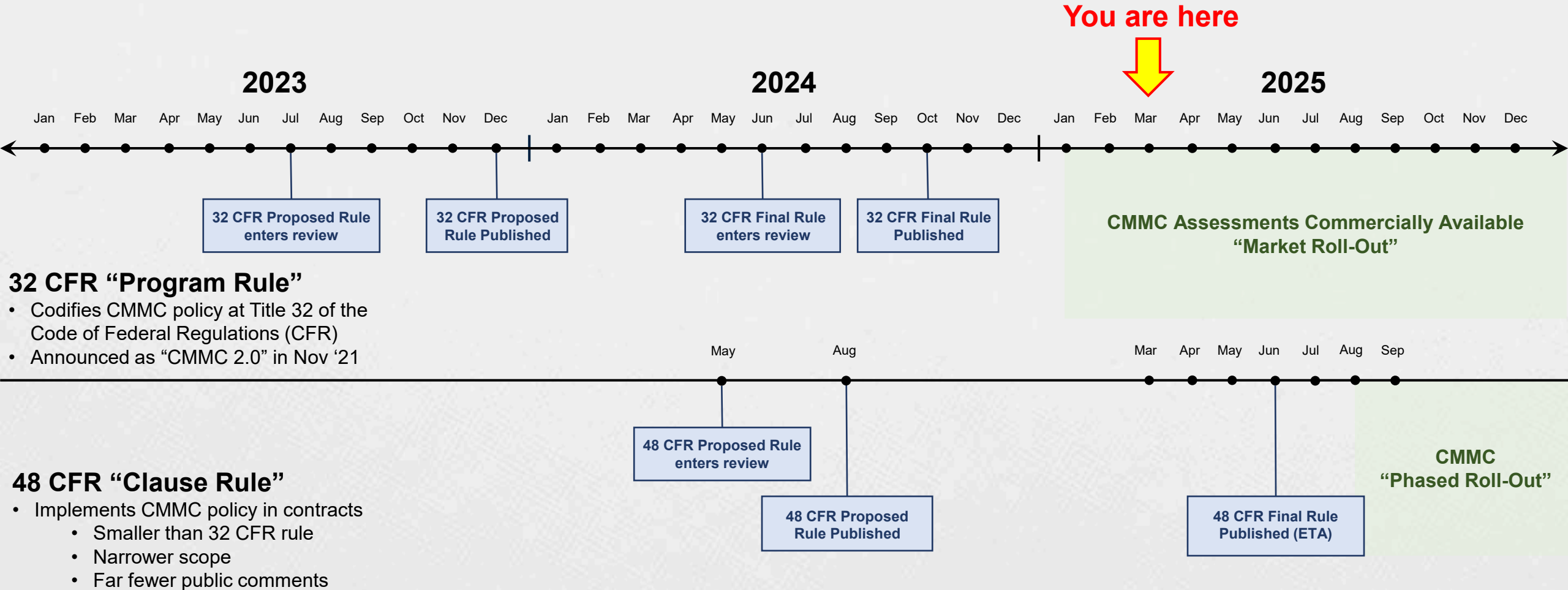


# CMMC Timeline & “Phased Roll-Out”

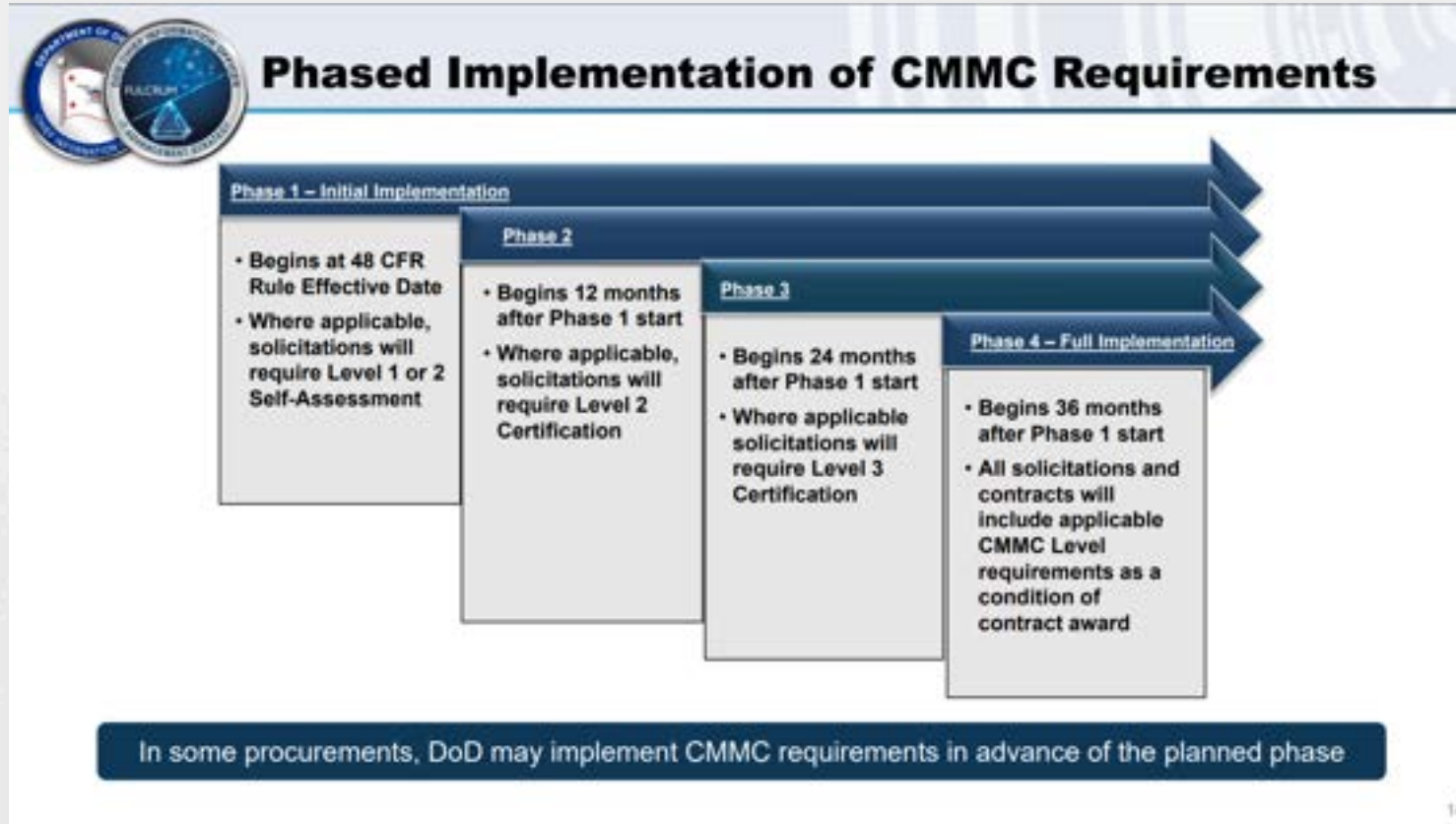
Contracting on borrowed time

# The CMMC regulation went into effect 12/16/2024

Certification assessments are commercially available; will be required in defense contracts ~Summer 2025



— The CMMC “Phased Roll-Out” is not a reliable basis for making strategic decisions; DoD has full discretion over each phase



<https://dodcio.defense.gov/cmmc/Resources-Documentation/>

## DoD Discretion by Level 2 Roll-Out Phase

### Phase 1:

- Can include requirements prior to effective date of the 48 CFR CMMC rule
- Level 2 certification instead of self-assessment

### Phase 2:

- Can delay inclusion of L2 certification to an option period instead of condition of award
- Level 3 certification instead of L2

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# CMMC Level Determination & Waivers

*"Ain't nobody self-assessing CMMC Level 2" - DoD*

# CMMC Level 2 Self-Assessments will be extremely rare

Plan to achieve level 2 via 3<sup>rd</sup>-party assessment

December 2024

January 2025

**Criteria for CMMC Levels**

**CMMC Level 1 (Self-Assessment)**  
 FCI only

**CMMC Level 2 (Self-Assessment)**  
 CUI in the NARA CUI Registry, but not in the Defense Organizational Index Grouping

**CMMC Level 2 (Certification)**  
 CUI in the NARA CUI Registry, but not in the Defense Organizational Index Grouping, to include:

- Controlled Technical Information,
- DoD Critical Infrastructure Security Information,
- Naval Nuclear Propulsion Information, and
- Unclassified Controlled Nuclear Information - Defense

**NARA CUI Organizational Index Grouping**

Controlled Information	<del>Defense</del>	Export Control	Financial
Intelligence	Intelligence	International Agreements	Law Enforcement
Legal	Medical and Public Health	Small Business Transactions	Statistical
Personnel	Privacy	Procurement and Acquisition	Proprietary Business Information
Professional	Technical	Tax	Transportation

Information that meet these criteria may require a higher CMMC level. CUI meeting multiple criteria will align to the highest applicable CMMC level.

<https://dodcio.defense.gov/cmmc/Resources-Documents/>

CLEAR  
For Open Publication  
Jan 17, 2025

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
1000 DEFENSE PENTAGON  
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-1000

MEMORANDUM FOR SENIOR PENTAGON LEADERSHIP  
DEFENSE AGENCY AND DOD FIELD ACTIVITY DIRECTORS.

SUBJECT: Implementing the Cybersecurity Maturity Model Certification (CMMC) Program: Guidance for Determining Appropriate CMMC Compliance Assessment Levels and Process for Waiving CMMC Assessment Requirements

The defense industrial base (DIB) is the target of recurrent and progressively sophisticated cyber attacks targeting Controlled Unclassified Information (CUI) and Federal Contract Information (FCI) processed in, stored on, or transmitted over nonfederal unclassified information systems. These attacks threaten Department of Defense (DoD) or Department mission execution, reduce warfighting capabilities, weaken American technological superiority, and exfiltrate intellectual property and national security information. The Department is undertaking multiple efforts to reduce the risk of cyber attacks to DIB businesses.

Defense contractors and subcontractors are required to safeguard unclassified nonpublic information by applying specified network security requirements, as defined in DoD Instruction 8582.01, *Security of Non-DoD Information Systems Processing Unclassified Nonpublic DoD Information*, which includes identified CUI and FCI that resides in or transits contractor unclassified information systems. Title 32 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) § 2002 describes requirements for adequate safeguarding that, in the context of Defense contracts, are implemented through Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement (DFARS) clause 252.204-7012, *Safeguarding Covered Defense Information and Cyber Incident Reporting*. This clause applies to contracts that require the processing, storing, or transmitting of CUI on contractor-owned information systems.

To enhance the security of DoD information and reduce the risk of cyber attacks to DIB businesses, the Department established the Cybersecurity Maturity Model Certification (CMMC) Program. The final CMMC Program rule was published to the *Federal Register* on October 15, 2024 and is codified in Title 32 CFR Part 170. The CMMC Program requires pre-award assessment of covered contractor information systems against prescribed cybersecurity standards for safeguarding CUI or FCI. The CMMC Program will implement pre-award assessments of contractor compliance with the appropriate information safeguarding requirements. Title 32 CFR § 170 defines applicability of CMMC requirements and Title 48 CFR DFARS provisions and clauses will implement those requirements.

Upon publication of the final Title 48 CFR DFARS rule, 2019-D041, Program Managers and requiring activities shall include the need for CMMC assessments in procurement request and requirement documents in accordance with phase-in timelines described in Title 32 CFR § 170.3. Attachment 1 to this memorandum provides Program Managers and requiring activities guidance to apply when determining the appropriate CMMC assessment level to include in each DoD solicitation and contract. Service and Component Acquisition Executives are authorized to waive inclusion of CMMC assessment requirements in DoD solicitations. Waivers are discussed in Attachment 2.

[https://dodprocurementtoolbox.com/uploads/DOPSR\\_Cleared\\_OSD\\_Memo\\_CMMC\\_Implementation\\_Policy\\_d26075de0f.pdf](https://dodprocurementtoolbox.com/uploads/DOPSR_Cleared_OSD_Memo_CMMC_Implementation_Policy_d26075de0f.pdf)



# CMMC Level 2 Self-Assessments will be extremely rare

Plan to achieve level 2 via 3<sup>rd</sup>-party assessment

**January 2025**



“CMMC Level 2 (Certification) is the minimum assessment requirement when the planned contract will require the contractor (or subcontractors) to process, store, or transmit CUI categorized under the National Archives CUI Registry Defense Organizational Index Grouping.”

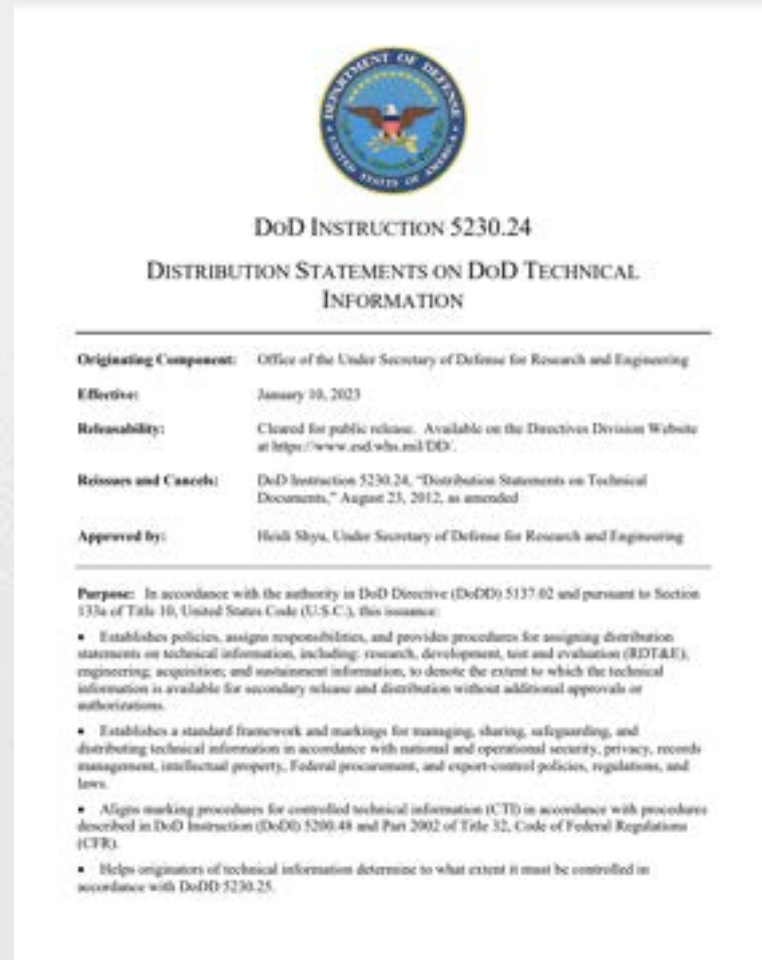
- **Controlled Technical Information**
- **DoD Critical Infrastructure Security Information**
- **Naval Nuclear Propulsion Information**
- **Privileged Safety Information**
- **Unclassified Controlled Nuclear Information - Defense**

[https://dodprocurementtoolbox.com/uploads/DOPSR\\_Cleared\\_OSD\\_Memo\\_CMMC\\_Implementation\\_Policy\\_d26075de0f.pdf](https://dodprocurementtoolbox.com/uploads/DOPSR_Cleared_OSD_Memo_CMMC_Implementation_Policy_d26075de0f.pdf)

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**January 2023**



**CTI: Controlled Technical Information** means technical information with military or space application that is subject to controls on the access, use, reproduction, modification, performance, display, release, disclosure, or dissemination.

- **Engineering drawings**
- **Configuration-management documentation**
- **Engineering data and associated lists**
- **Standards**
- **Specifications**
- **Technical manuals, reports, and orders**
- **Blueprints, plans, and instructions**

<https://www.esd.whs.mil/portals/54/documents/dd/issuances/dodi/523024p.pdf>



# CMMC waivers are for *contracts*, not *contractors*

Waivers are determined prior to issuing a solicitation and will be extremely rare

January 2025



- All waiver requests go through component CIOs before service/component acquisition executive approval.
- CMMC waivers may be requested for individual procurements or classes of procurements.
- CMMC waivers do not affect the underlying security requirements in DFARS 7012, FAR 52.204-21.
- When market research indicates that including a CMMC assessment requirement may impede ability to generate robust competition or delay delivery of mission critical capabilities, the [acquisition executive] may approve requests to waive inclusion of CMMC assessment requirements.

[https://dodprocurementtoolbox.com/uploads/DOPSR\\_Cleared\\_OSD\\_Memo\\_CMMC\\_Implementation\\_Policy\\_d26075de0f.pdf](https://dodprocurementtoolbox.com/uploads/DOPSR_Cleared_OSD_Memo_CMMC_Implementation_Policy_d26075de0f.pdf)

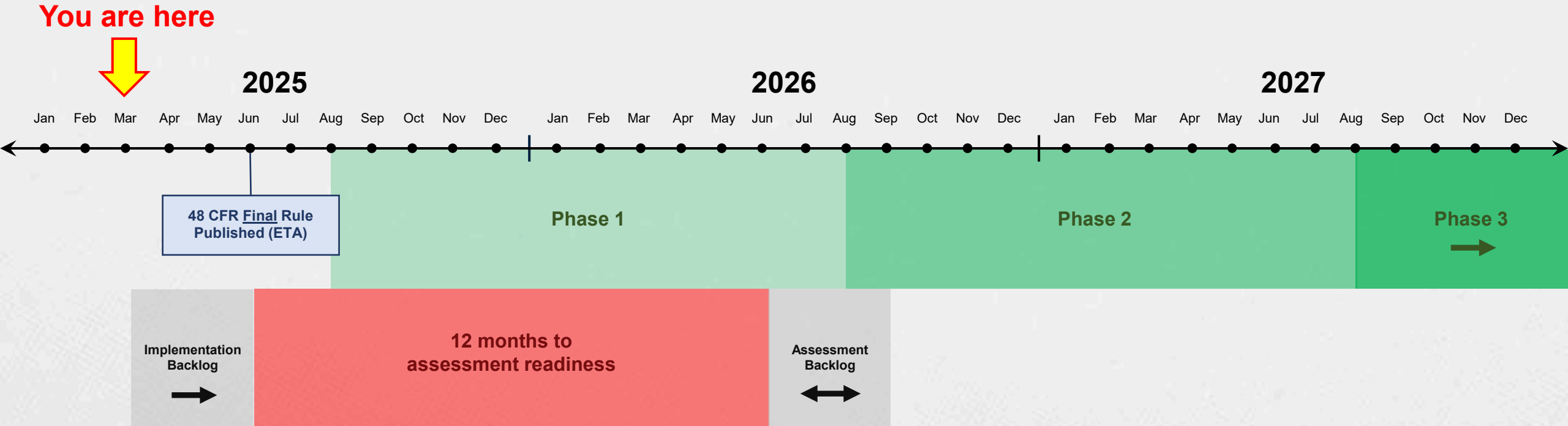




# CMMC Assessment Readiness Lead Time

“CALT” – The longest pole in the tent

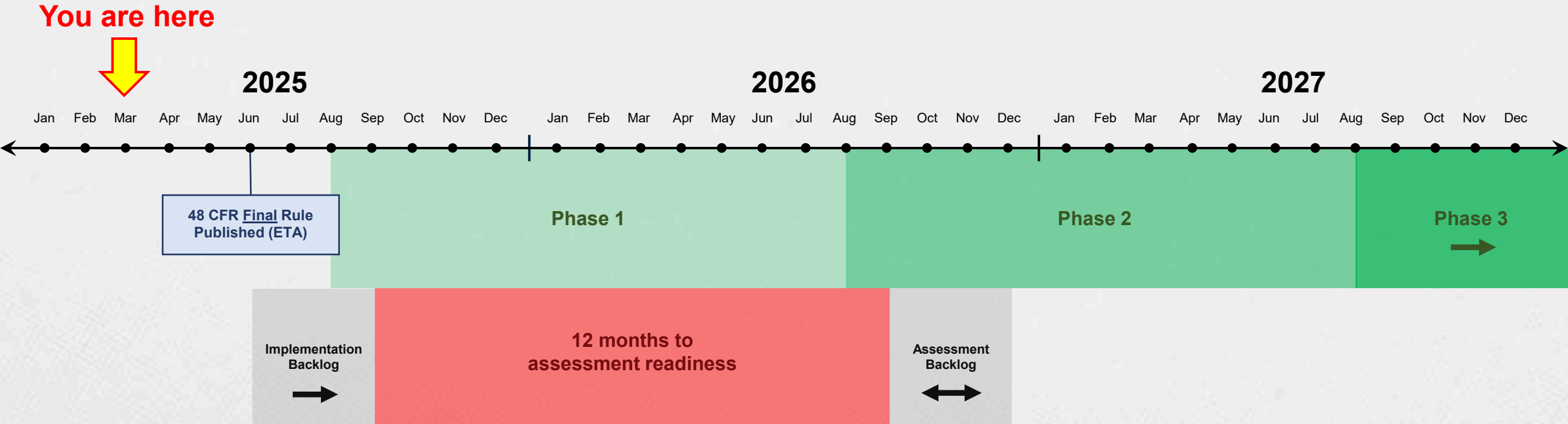
# Delaying implementation until CMMC is in solicitations will halt new contract awards for 12+ months



**Starting from scratch in Q1 2025 = new award target Q4 2026**



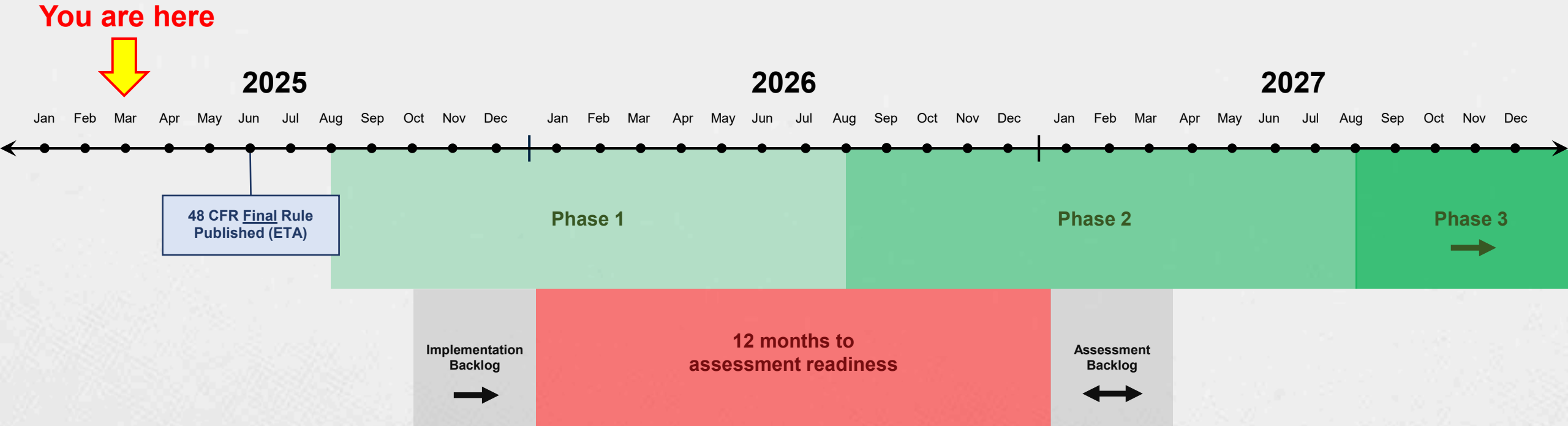
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**Kickoff from 48 CFR final rule publication = new award target Q1 2027**



# Delaying implementation until CMMC is in solicitations will halt new contract awards for 12+ months



**Q4 2025 implementation kickoff = new award target Q2 2027**

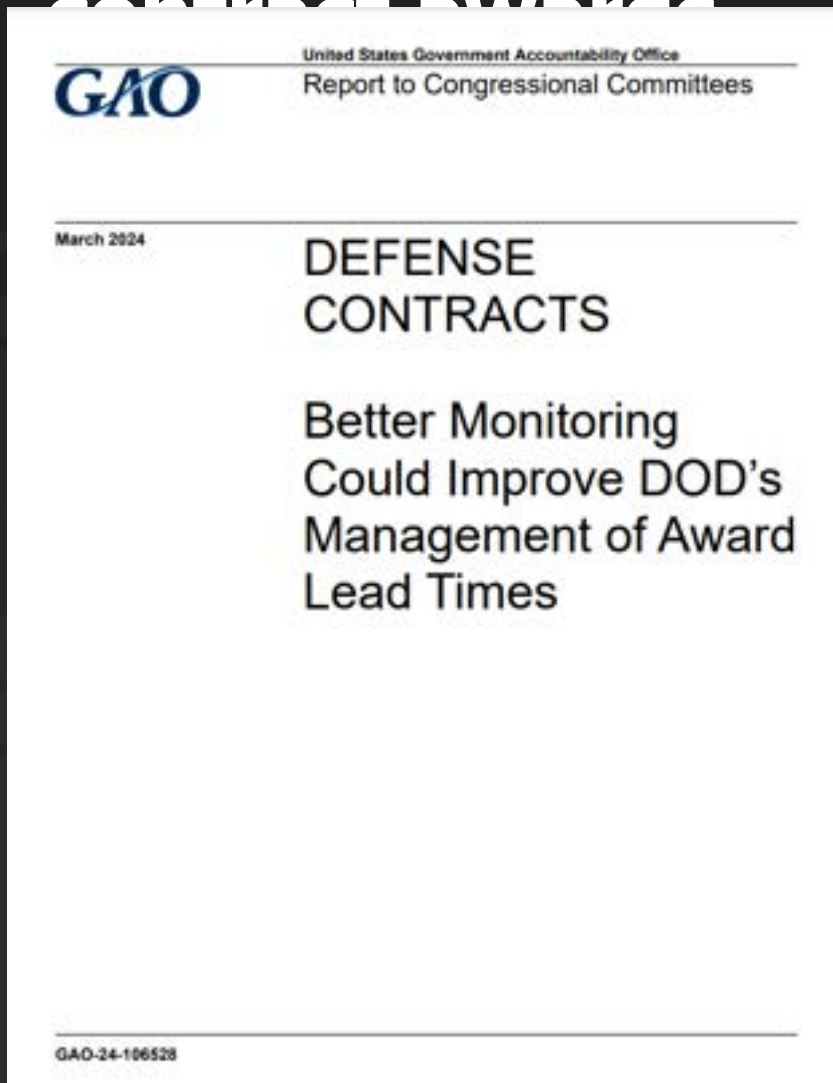




# Procurement Administrative Lead Time

“PALT” – The most important metric behind your CMMC strategy

**If your total CMMC implementation + assessment time is longer than your customer's PALT, then you will miss contract awards**



## **Procurement Administrative Lead Time (PALT)**

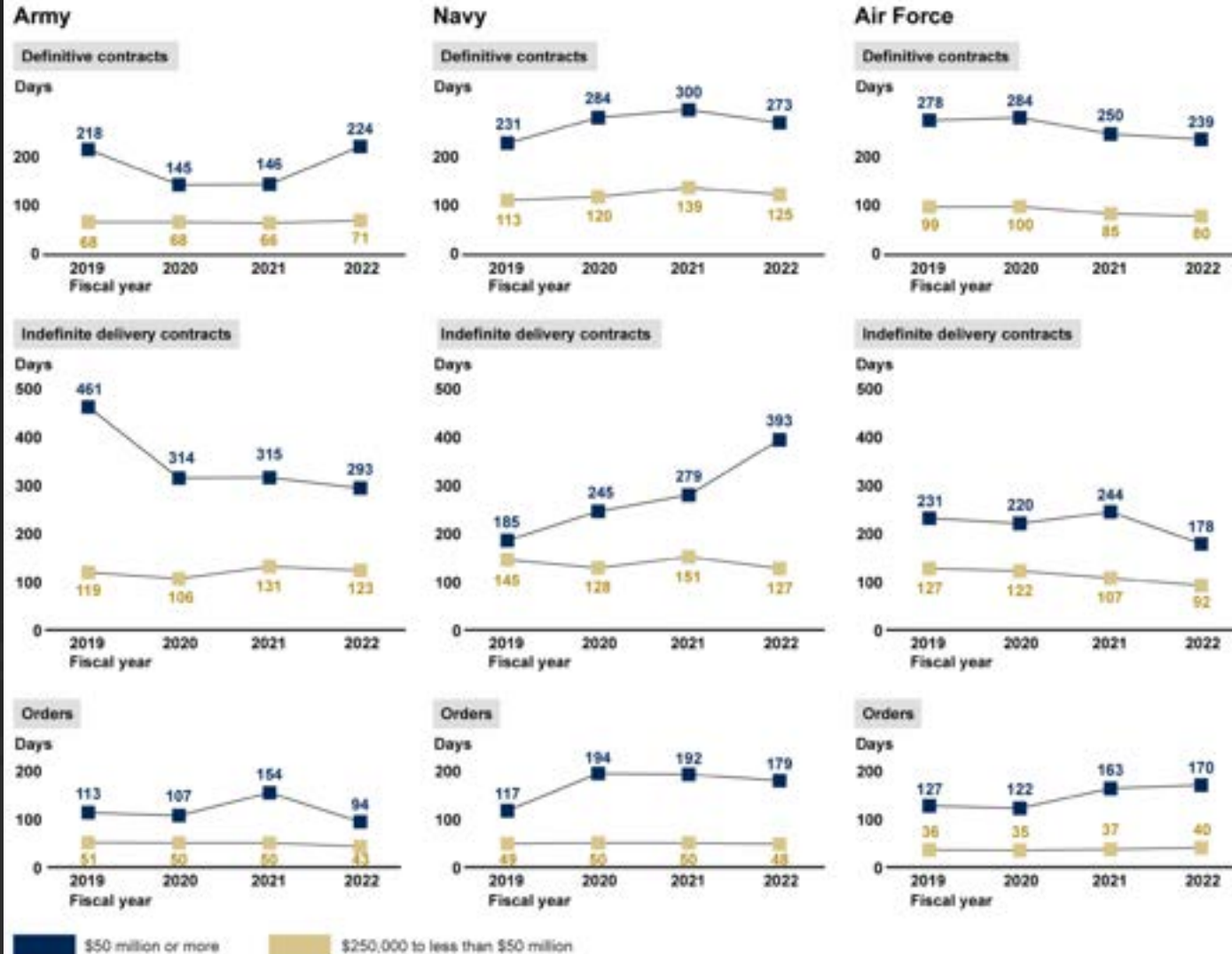
The length of time between when an agency solicits offers from potential contractors and the date it awards a contract.

<https://www.gao.gov/products/gao-24-106528>



# FY19 – FY20: DOD-wide median PALT has decreased by more than 20%, from 41 days to just **32 days**

Figure 12: Change in Median Procurement Administrative Lead Time by Contracting Approach and Selected DOD Components for Contracts Above and Below \$50 Million in Value, Fiscal Years 2019–2022

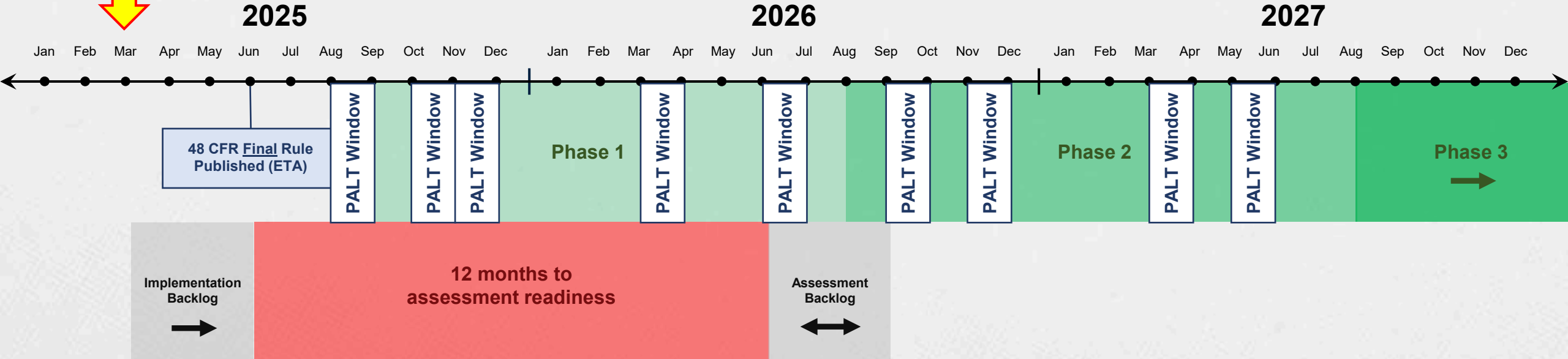


Source: GAO analysis of Federal Procurement Data System (FPDS) contract data. | GAO-24-106528



# Delaying implementation until CMMC is in solicitations will halt new contract awards for 12+ months

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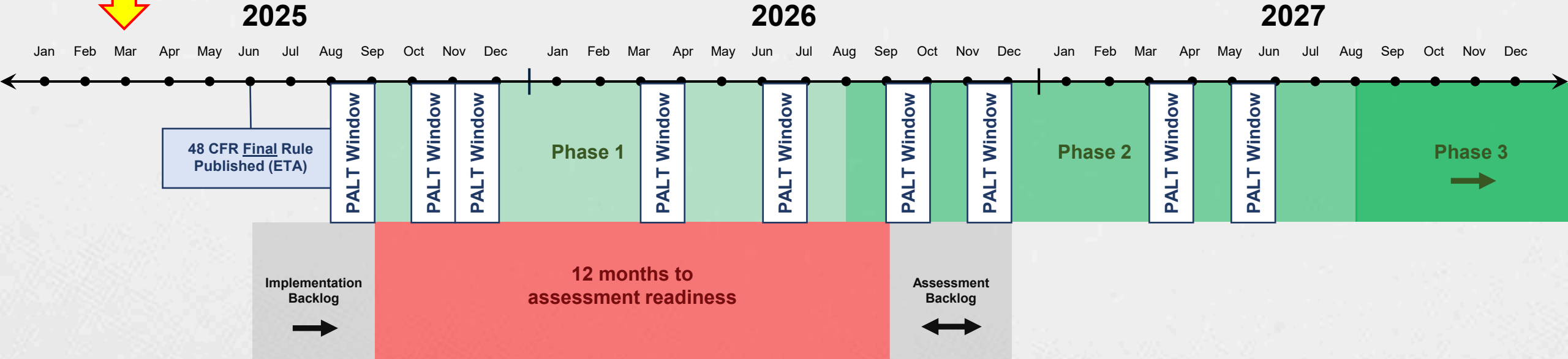
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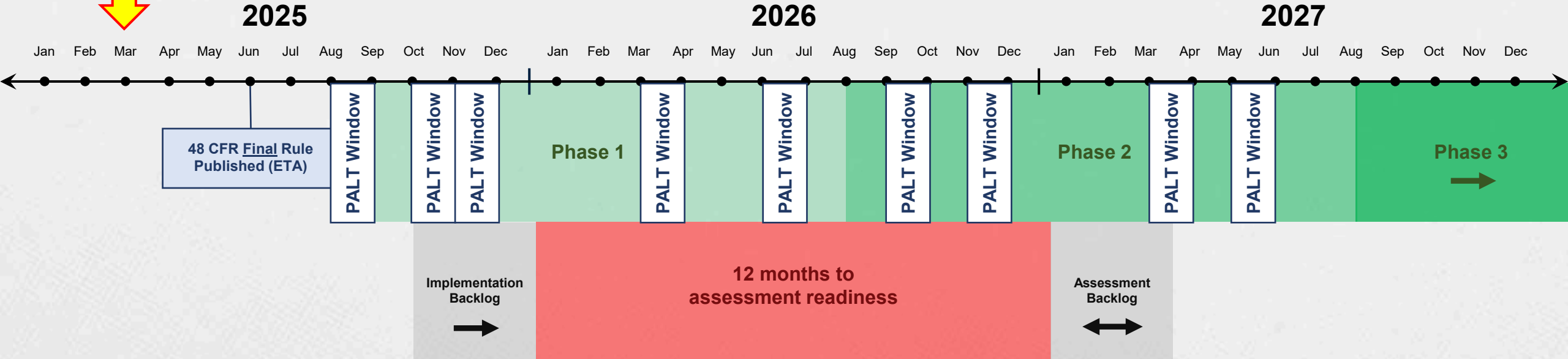


**Kickoff from 48 CFR final rule publication = new award target Q1 2027**



# Delaying implementation until CMMC is in solicitations will halt new contract awards for 12+ months

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**Q4 2025 implementation kickoff = new award target Q2 2027**





THANK YOU

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