




Cybersecurity Maturity Model Certification (CMMC) Industry Insights

Challenges & Strategies

A graphic titled "Industry Insights Challenges & Strategies" featuring a portrait of Cole French, Director of Cybersecurity Services at Kratos Defense and Security Solutions. The graphic has an orange and white color scheme with a black and brown pixelated pattern on the right side.

Industry Insights
Challenges & Strategies



Cole French
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Challenges and Strategies

CMMC Accelerate | Carahsoft Conference & Collaboration Center

Herndon, VA | March 13, 2025

Agenda

- Kratos – Who We Are
- State of the Ecosystem
- Strategies
- Assessments (So Far)
- What's Ahead
- How to Help Your Assessor

Kratos – Who We Are

- Kratos builds technology and other products supporting strategic and transformational national security programs
 - ❑ Unmanned systems
 - ❑ Assured aerospace communications
 - ❑ Cybersecurity (FedRAMP 3PAO, CMMC C3PAO, RPO, and Advanced Cyber Services)
 - ❑ Strategic programs
 - ❑ Microwave electronics
 - ❑ Training and simulation

State of the Ecosystem

- The 32 CFR (Program Rule) was published on October 15, 2024
- Phased implementation extended
- Applicability of CMMC to External Service Providers clarified
- FedRAMP equivalency requirements are unchanged, but applicability updated for Security Protection Assets
- Assessment Team composition requirements defined
- Assessment scoring and POA&M eligibility defined
- Quality Assurance requirements defined
- **Contracting officers can write CMMC requirements into contracts today**

Strategies – Scope

- At the most basic level, the scope is what's being evaluated
- Define the assets in scope (people, processes, and technologies)
- Remember those things you forgot
 - ❑ Data flows are part of your scope
 - ❑ Automation can be helpful
- Leverage the CMMC scoping guide
- If you're not confident in your scope, keep working at it

Strategies – Auditing

- Need to capture from a potentially wide-range of endpoint types
- Defined audit events for capture (broader the better)
- Detection and notification of logging failures (prove the negative)
 - ❑ Failure of an endpoint to audit events
 - ❑ Failure to process an endpoint's logged events
- Reporting, correlation, and reduction capabilities
- Audit log reviews and analysis (reviewing auditable event types and reviewing audit events are not the same thing)

Strategies – Those Things That Haven't Happened Yet

- Common things we've assessed that haven't happened yet
 - ❑ Emergency changes
 - ❑ Security incidents
 - ❑ Termination or transfer of users
 - ❑ Documentation reviews
 - ❑ Removing material that shouldn't have been posted publicly
- Process, Process, Process (in documentation, of course)
- Testing is a great practice to demonstrate *how* these *would* be handled

Strategies – POA&Ms

- Understanding what a POA&M actually is (and isn't)
 - ❑ An integral part of maintaining any system
 - ❑ More just vulnerabilities
 - ❑ Key component of maturity, as it tells a story of the system
 - ❑ It is not the outcome of an assessment
- An empty POA&M is problematic
 - ❑ No system has zero vulnerabilities
 - ❑ Part of managing a system should include identifying areas for improvement
- Leveraging automation can be helpful

Strategies – Risk Assessments

- A security control assessment is not a risk assessment by itself
- Vulnerability scanning is not a risk assessment by itself
- Evaluating security configuration settings is not a risk assessment by itself
- Comprehensive risk assessments must evaluate risks to the business and mission and determine the likelihood of their occurrence
- The activities above can be components of risk assessments
- More importantly, the activities above can be informed by risk assessments, which enables targeted risk reduction

Strategies – Defined Frequency

- Organizationally defined frequencies cannot exceed 1 year
- Don't use 'frequently'
- Don't use 'occasionally'
- Don't use 'periodically'
- Don't use 'sometimes'
- Don't use 'every three years'
- Be specific, but also give yourself wiggle room (e.g., “a period not to exceed 30 days”)

Assessments (So Far)

- CMMC Assessments began on January 2, 2025
- The Certificate of Status was released for use on March 7, 2025
- ‘Continuous monitoring’ is an annual attestation of compliance
- Enclaves can make it easier (especially VDI)
- Organization and role definition are important
- The queue is growing steadily

What's Ahead?

- Assessments, assessments, assessments (but maybe not so fast)
- Title 48 CFR will trigger Phase 1 of the implementation
- The mechanics of the program
- FedRAMP Equivalency updates
- Enclaves look more and more appealing
- Stronger focus on implementing 'make-or-break' controls
- Assessor interpretations highlight the need for strong preparation

How to Help Your Assessor

- Finish your SSP (no, really)
- Documentation matrix
- Clearly define external service provider relationships
- Shared Responsibility Matrices
 - ❑ Understand them (really)
 - ❑ They're needed for more than just cloud service providers
- Leverage inheritance properly (e.g., don't regurgitate material from a provider's SSP in your SSP)