

Voluntary Program for Critical Infrastructure Cybersecurity Enhancement

As directed by Executive Order (EO) 13636, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) is partnering with the critical infrastructure community to establish a voluntary program to support increased security and resilience of the Nation's cyber infrastructure, through use of the [Cybersecurity Framework](#) (CSF).

About the Voluntary Program

The voluntary program will be the coordination point within the federal government for critical infrastructure owners and operators interested in improving their cyber risk management processes.

The goals of the voluntary program are to (1) support industry in increasing cyber resilience and (2) increase awareness and use of the CSF in support of the first goal. To advance these goals, the program will be flexible, allowing organizations to participate in the voluntary program in different ways.

Value Proposition

The voluntary program supports practical application of the CSF by facilitating:

- Forums for knowledge sharing and collaboration related to CSF use with other program participants. Over time, the voluntary program will work with the private sector to encourage the development of communities of interest.
- Prioritized access to freely available technical assistance to help organizations strengthen capabilities to manage cyber risks, or assist in use of the CSF as part of their process to manage cyber risks. *Note:* Owners and operators in need of incident response support will not be denied assistance based on participation in the program.
- Opportunities to influence peers and other partners in the critical infrastructure community.
- Assistance with meeting fiduciary responsibilities to manage cyber risks, in a consistent way with others in critical infrastructure that can aid in communication.

Voluntary Program Activities

Support Framework Use: The voluntary program will assist stakeholders in understanding how to use the CSF, support engagements with sectors to develop sector-specific CSF guidance, and serve as the central place for information on existing DHS cyber risk management-related capabilities and resources. Over time the voluntary program will also provide information on cross sector, industry, and State, Local, Tribal, and Territorial (SLTT) resources.

- DHS will provide technical assistance to help organizations use the CSF to help critical infrastructure stakeholders increase their cyber resilience. The voluntary program will promote the DHS Cyber Resilience Review (CRR) to organizations for general guidance.
- For sector-specific guidance, the voluntary program will work with each sector to take into account their unique set of threats, business needs, and legal and regulatory environments in regards to using the CSF.
- The voluntary program will also be a mechanism to reference existing public and private sector capabilities and approaches that may assist with CSF use. This may include efforts such as the Electricity Subsector Cybersecurity Capability Maturity Model (ES-C2M2).

Conduct Outreach: The voluntary program conducts outreach to educate stakeholders on the importance of cyber risk management, and promote awareness and use of the CSF, including available training and education opportunities. The program will also support engagement between the cross sector community and the organizations evaluating cybersecurity incentives.

Collect Feedback: DHS seeks to collect voluntary feedback from stakeholder organizations about implementation experiences. DHS will use this feedback to refine implementation guidance provided by the voluntary program, and to share lessons learned, as appropriate. During this process, relevant feedback on the CSF will be shared with NIST, and will be input into the open and transparent process for development of the next version of the CSF.

Voluntary Program for Critical Infrastructure Cybersecurity Enhancement

Over time, the voluntary program will also collect feedback on the use and the impact of use of the CSF.

Voluntary Program Participation

To work with organizations interested in voluntary program participation, DHS will leverage its current national critical infrastructure security and resilience efforts – building off long-standing partnerships and processes developed with industry. The voluntary program will coordinate additional CSF outreach activities through partnership with Sector Specific Agencies (SSAs), Sector Coordinating Councils (SCCs), and other industry partners.

Stakeholders can participate in the voluntary program through a range of activities, which can include:

Engagement: Reach out to DHS to leverage capabilities and resources to assist in managing cyber risks. Any organization may leverage those resources that are freely available.

Reaching Out to DHS for Support Using CSF:

Organizations can use the CSF as a part of a systematic process for managing and communicating cyber risk. Organizations may be performing one or more of the following activities:

- Communicating cyber risk: Using the CSF to communicate cyber risk internally or externally.
- Assessing current profile: Using the Framework as part of process to manage cyber risk; determining current profile
- Progress towards achieving target profile: Understand current profile, have defined target profile, and have planned activities or investments to achieve target profile
- Risk monitoring/continuous improvement: Managing cyber risk consistent with target profile

Stakeholder Engagement

The voluntary program will promote the use of the CSF through the following types of engagement avenues:

Government-to-Business (G2B): Coordinating with each of the 16 critical infrastructure sectors to establish sector-specific approaches and guidance, utilizing established partnership mechanisms, models

and approaches, as well as working directly with organizations interested in using the CSF.

Government-to-Government (G2G): Working with federal agencies and SLTT governments to support the promotion and use of the CSF.

Business-to-Business (B2B): Encouraging industry drivers for CSF promotion and use; and working with organizations to develop case studies and/or work with their industry peers and business partners to promote use of the CSF.

Phased Approach to Engagement

The voluntary program will grow over time using a phased approach. Though there are proposed phases with respective focus areas, the program will support any organization interested in using the CSF, or any sector with implementation planning and assistance, at any given point.

Phase One: Begins in February 2014 in conjunction with the release of the CSF. This phase focuses on momentum building, development of sector-specific implementation strategies for the life-line sectors, assistance for small to medium businesses, and collecting feedback on program resources from early participants in Phase One. The voluntary program will also coordinate feedback on incentives.

Phase Two: Begins in 2015. This phase will focus on supporting implementation of sector-specific strategies and continued coordination around feedback on incentives.

Phase Three: Begins in 2016. This phase includes ongoing support for use of the CSF and continued coordination on incentives feedback.

For more information email
DHSVoluntaryProgram@hq.dhs.gov