



# FedRAMP's Threat to Controls Analysis

Federal Computer Security Managers' Forum

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## Purpose and Agenda

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To gain shared understanding of  
FedRAMP's Threat-Based Initiative



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- I. Overview: Threat Based Methodology
- II. Applying Threat Based Findings
- III. Demo

# Why This, Why Now

## Threat Based Authorization Approach

### The Challenge:

Authorizing Officials (AOs) have limited information into the current threat landscape which may result in an inherent acceptance of more risk.

### The Solution:

FedRAMP partnered with DHS CISA .govCAR to develop a methodology for scoring each FedRAMP security control against the NSA Technical Cyber Threat Framework (NTCTF v2) to determine which security controls and capabilities are most effective to protect, detect, and respond to current prevalent threats.

### Benefits:

- Enables agencies, Cloud Service Providers (CSPs), and other industry partners to prioritize security controls that are relevant and effective against the current threat environment.
- Informed, quantitative-based risk management decisions in authorizing information systems for government use.
- Potential for faster authorization timelines by focusing on prioritized security controls.

## Why a Threat-Based Approach?

To provide a baseline of threat-based controls that enable CSPs, Agencies, and FedRAMP PMO to quickly produce a real time risk profile for a system.



**RISK  
MANAGEMENT**



## I. Threat Analysis

Leverages the .govCAR methodology to assign protection values to each security control ranking the controls ability to Protect, Detect, and Respond to a series of threat actions

## II. Security Controls Assessment

Decomposition of security controls into control items, to enable a more granular assessment of risk and support automated assessment. Each controls item is assessed and given a value of “satisfied” or “other than satisfied”.

## III. Risk Profiling

Utilizes the intersection of the assessment results and the threat analysis to produce an overall risk profile for each security capability and a recommendation which supports the authorization decision

# I. Threat Analysis

## Threat Analysis

Leverages the .govCAR methodology to assign protection values to each security control ranking the controls ability to Protect, Detect, and Respond to a series of threat actions

### Security Controls Scoring

- Controls scoring was completed over 5 scoring sessions each lasting approximately one month.
- Representatives from **DHS .govCAR, DHS CDM, and FedRAMP** participated in the scoring sessions that were moderated by VITG, Inc.
- To support scoring of the **FedRAMP Moderate Baseline** security controls, each control was decomposed down into its associated control items. Threat scoring was performed at the control item level.
- Data was captured in a series of excel spreadsheets and then inputted into a relational database for further analysis.

## Security Control Protection Value

Leveraging a mathematical formula provided by .govCAR and overall protection value (PV) was calculated for each security control based upon the results of the threat analysis.

To calculate the overall protection value for each control item, P/D/R functions are weighted as P = .4, D = .3, and R = .3.

The final computation of the control item (PV) is calculated using the following:

$$\begin{aligned}
 & \textit{Protection Value (PV)} \\
 &= \sum_{TA} TA_{HeatMapValue} * \{ .4 * (.9P_{S(0,1)} + .6P_{M(0,1)} + .3P_{L(0,1)} + .1P_{A(0,1)}) + .3 \\
 & * (.9D_{S(0,1)} + .6D_{M(0,1)} + .3D_{L(0,1)} + .1D_{A(0,1)}) + .3 \\
 & * (.9R_{S(0,1)} + .6R_{M(0,1)} + .3R_{L(0,1)} + .1R_{A(0,1)}) \}
 \end{aligned}$$

## Security Control Prioritization

- Using the established protection values the security controls were ranked in priority order (highest to lowest scores).
- Leveraging the relational database and the threat-based risk profiling application a list of threat-based security controls was produced for various thresholds (i.e. risk tolerances).

The screenshot shows the GSA Capabilities Profiler interface. At the top, there are navigation links for 'Risk Profile', 'Admin', 'Views', and 'LogOut'. The main heading is 'Set Protection Threshold'. Below this, a message states: 'Please select the percentage of the threat-based protections that you would like to implement. For example, selecting a value of 80% would identify the list of security controls with protection values that fall within the top 80% of scores.' A horizontal slider is shown with a red dot at 80%. Below the slider are two buttons: 'SET THRESHOLD %' and 'CONTINUE'. The 'Current Threshold Percentage' is displayed as 80. Below the slider, the heading 'Threat Based Controls (127)' is shown. A table lists the following controls and their protection values:

Control Number	Control Name	Protection Value
AC-2	ACCOUNT MANAGEMENT	83.88
AC-17	REMOTE ACCESS	83.88
CM-5	ACCESS RESTRICTIONS FOR CHANGE	64.9
CM-5(1)	AUTOMATED ACCESS ENFORCEMENT / AUDITING	64.9
CM-5(5)	LIMIT PRODUCTION / OPERATIONAL PRIVILEGES	64.9
AC-2(1)	AUTOMATED SYSTEM ACCOUNT MANAGEMENT	63.25
AC-2(11)	USAGE CONDITIONS	63.25
AC-2(12)	ACCOUNT MONITORING / ATYPICAL USAGE	63.25
AC-2(13)	DISABLE ACCOUNTS FOR HIGH-RISK INDIVIDUALS	63.25
AC-2(2)	REMOVAL OF TEMPORARY / EMERGENCY ACCOUNTS	63.25

## II. Security Controls Assessment



# Security Controls Assessment

The results of the security controls assessment can be leveraged to produce an implementation value for each control which is weighted based upon the protection values of the related control items. The formula below represents the calculation for control implementation value:

$$\text{Control Implementation Value} = \left[ \sum_{PV} PV_{\text{ControlItems}} * (\% \text{control items implemented}) \right] / PV$$

Account Management (AC-2)		PV	Imp. Status	CI Score	Sub-totals	Imp. Value	%Imp
AC-2(a)	63.25	83.88	1	63.25	47.44	61.19	73%
AC-2(d)	63.25		1	63.25	13.75		
AC-2(e)	63.25		1	63.25			
AC-2(f)	63.25		1	63.25			
AC-2(g)	63.25		1	63.25			
AC-2(h)	63.25		0	0			
AC-2(i)	63.25		0	0			
AC-2(j)	63.25		1	63.25			
AC-2(b)	20.63		1	20.63			
AC-2(c)	20.63		1	20.63			
AC-2(k)	20.63		0	0			

Security Control Implementation Value (AC-2 example)

# III. Risk Profiling

To create threat-based risk profile, each of the NIST security controls was mapped to the capabilities listed in NISTIR 8011. The implementation values for each of the NIST 800-53 security controls that was related to a capability were then used to calculate an overall maturity level for each capability.

**Example:**

Manage Trust for Person Granted Access (TRUST)		
Control No.	Control Name	% Implemented
AC-2	Account Management	73%
AC-5	Separation of Duties	80%
AC-6	Least Privilege	100%
<b>Capability Maturity Level:</b>		<b>84%</b>

# Applications

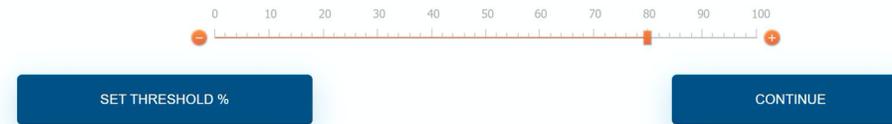


Opportunity	Impact
Incorporate into Annual Assessment	Enables annual assessments to focus on prioritized threat-based controls.
Assess FedRAMP Tailored Baseline	Simplifies and expedites the process to enter the federal marketplace, equipping systems with the controls that will be most effective against threats.
Agile Authorization Process	Enabled process for information systems can go live once a subset of controls are implemented.
Produce Risk Profile using OSCAL (e.g., SAR, POA&M, CDM sensors)	Enables an automated, near real-time update of the risk profile for an information system to inform a better decision making and enable Ongoing Authorization.
Assist Authorization Decision Making	Provides threat-based data that better informs risk management decisions regarding authorizations.
Prioritize Remediation Efforts	Enables wise resource spending and allocation by allowing the government to attack the most significant problems first.
Identify Desired Future State	Enables strategic planning through the creation of data to assist with road mapping and cost benefit analyses.
Enhance ConMon Activities	Ensures the federal government is focusing resources to achieve the most value as they continuously monitor and improve security of their systems.

Demo

## Set Protection Threshold

Please select the percentage of the threat-based protections that you would like to implement. For example, selecting a value of 80% would identify the list of security controls with protection values the fall within the top 80% of scores.



Current Threshold Percentage:

## Threat Based Controls (127)

Control Number	Control Name	Protection Value
AC-2	ACCOUNT MANAGEMENT	83.88
AC-17	REMOTE ACCESS	83.88
CM-5	ACCESS RESTRICTIONS FOR CHANGE	64.9
CM-5(1)	AUTOMATED ACCESS ENFORCEMENT / AUDITING	64.9
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GSA-Capabilities Profiler
Risk Profile
Admin ▾
Views ▾
LogOut

### Security Categorization

Please select the FIPS 199 security categorization for the information system.

- NIST LOW
- NIST MODERATE
- NIST HIGH

NEXT



## Preparatory Controls

	Control Number	Control Name	Implementation Status
+	CM-8	INFORMATION SYSTEM CO...	Satisfied
+	CM-9	CONFIGURATION MANAGE...	Satisfied
+	CP-2	CONTINGENCY PLAN	Satisfied
-	PL-2	SYSTEM SECURITY PLAN	Satisfied
	PL-2(a)	Develops a security plan for t...	Satisfied
	PL-2(a)(1)	Is consistent with the organiz...	Satisfied
	PL-2(a)(2)	Explicitly defines the authori...	Satisfied
	PL-2(a)(3)	Describes the operational co...	Satisfied
	PL-2(a)(4)	Provides the security categor...	Satisfied
	PL-2(a)(5)	Describes the operational en...	Satisfied
	PL-2(a)(6)	Provides an overview of the ...	Satisfied
	PL-2(a)(7)	Identifies any relevant overla...	Satisfied
	PL-2(a)(8)	Describes the security contr...	Satisfied
	PL-2(a)(9)	Is reviewed and approved by ...	Satisfied
	PL-2(b)	Distributes copies of the sec...	Satisfied



Threat Based Controls (122)

	Control Number	Control Name	Implementation Status
-	AC-2	ACCOUNT MANAGEMENT	Partially Satisfied
	AC-2(a)	Identifies and selects the foll...	Satisfied
	AC-2(b)	Assigns account managers f...	Satisfied
	AC-2(c)	Establishes conditions for gr...	Satisfied
	AC-2(d)	Specifies authorized users of...	Satisfied
	AC-2(e)	Requires approvals by [Assi...	Satisfied
	AC-2(f)	Creates, enables, modifies, d...	Satisfied
	AC-2(g)	Monitors the use of informati...	Satisfied
	AC-2(h)	Notifies account managers:	Satisfied
	AC-2(i)	Authorizes access to the info...	Other Than Satisfied
	AC-2(j)	Reviews accounts for compli...	Satisfied
	AC-2(k)	Establishes a process for rei...	Satisfied



Threat Based Risk Profile

Security Capability	Maturity Level
Manage and Assess Risk (RISK) (9)	100%
Perform Resilient Systems Engineering (SE) (16)	100%
Hardware Asset Management (HWAM) (7)	100%
Software Asset Management (SWAM) (12)	100%
Configuration Settings Management (CSM) (49)	100%
Manage Trust for Persons Granted Access (TRUST) (6)	98.43%
Manage Behavioral Expectations (BEHAVE) (9)	100%
Manage Credentials and Authentication (CRED) (40)	99.54%
Manage Privileges and Accounts (PRIV) (30)	99.38%
Manage Network Boundaries (BOUND-N) (5)	100%
Manage Other Boundaries (BOUND-O) (1)	100%
Manage Preparation for Events (Incidents and Contingencies) (PREP) (13)	100%
Manage Anomalous Event Detection (DETECT) (51)	99.82%
Manage Anomalous Event Response and Recovery (RESPOND) (13)	100%

Set Authorization Threshold

Recommendation



Satisfactory (99.80%)



GSA GSA-Capabilities Profiler Risk Profile Admin Views LogOut

### Threat Based Risk Profile

**Manage Trust for Persons Granted Access (TRUST) (98.43)**

Control Number	Control Name	Percent Implemented
AC-2	ACCOUNT MANAGEMENT	90.57
AC-2(1)	AUTOMATED SYSTEM ACCOUNT MANAGEMENT	100.00
AC-5	SEPARATION OF DUTIES	100.00
AC-6	LEAST PRIVILEGE	100.00
PS-2	POSITION RISK DESIGNATION	100.00
PS-3	PERSONNEL SCREENING	100.00

Close

	Maturity Level
	100%
	100%
	100%
	100%
	100%
	98.43%
	100%
	99.54%
	99.38%
	100%
Manage Other Boundaries (BOUND-O) (1)	100%
Manage Preparation for Events (Incidents and Contingencies) (PREP) (13)	100%
Manage Anomalous Event Detection (DETECT) (51)	99.82%
Manage Anomalous Event Response and Recovery (RESPOND) (13)	100%



## Security Controls to Capabilities Mapping

RISK	SE	HWAM	SWAM	CSM	VULN	TRUST	BEHAVE	CRED	PRIV	BOUND-P	BOUND-N	BOUND-O	PREP	DETECT	RESPOND
AC-1	AC-10	AC-19	CM-2(3)	AC-9	RA-5	AC-2	AC-9	AC-2	AC-2	MA-4	AC-4	AC-17(2)	AT-3	AC-2	AC-1
AT-1	AC-11	AC-19(5)	CM-2(7)	AC-10	RA-5(1)	AC-2(1)	AC-16	AC-2(2)	AC-2(9)	MA-4(1)	AC-17	AC-17(9)	CM-2	AC-2(1)	AU-2
AU-1	AC-11(1)	AC-20	CM-3(1)	AC-11	RA-5(2)	AC-2(9)	AC-16(3)	AC-2(3)	AC-2(10)	MA-5	AC-17(1)	AC-19(5)	CM-2(1)	AC-2(2)	AU-3
CA-1	AC-12	AC-20(2)	CM-3(2)	AC-11(1)	RA-5(3)	AC-5	AT-1	AC-2(4)	AC-3	MA-5(1)	AC-17(3)	SA-4(10)	CM-2(2)	AC-2(3)	AU-3(1)
CA-2(1)	AC-17(9)	CM-2(7)	CM-4	AC-12	RA-5(4)	AC-6	AT-2	AC-2(5)	AC-6	PE-2	AC-17(4)	SC-8	CM-2(3)	AC-2(4)	AU-6
CA-5	AU-6(10)	CM-3	CM-4(1)	AC-14	RA-5(5)	AC-16	AT-2(2)	AC-2(9)	AC-6(1)	PE-2(1)	AC-18	SC-8(1)	CM-2(7)	AC-2(12)	AU-6(1)
CA-5(1)	AU-16	CM-3(1)	CM-5(3)	AC-17(9)		AU-9(4)	AT-3	AC-2(10)	AC-6(2)	PE-3	AC-18(1)	SC-8(2)	CM-6	AC-3	AU-7
CA-6	CA-8	CM-3(2)	CM-7	AC-18(4)		PL-4	AT-4	AC-2(11)	AC-6(3)	PE-3(1)	AC-18(4)	SC-12	CM-6(1)	AC-4	CM-2
CA-7	CA-8(1)	CM-8	CM-7(1)	AU-3		PS-2	AU-1	AC-2(12)	AC-6(5)	PE-4	AC-18(5)	SC-12(1)	CM-6(2)	AC-4(8)	CM-2(1)
CA-7(1)	CM-1	CM-8(1)	CM-7(2)	AU-3(1)		PS-3	AU-2	AC-2(13)	AC-6(9)	PE-5	AC-19	SC-13	CM-8	AC-4(12)	CP-1
CA-9(1)	CM-3	CM-8(2)	CM-7(4)	AU-3(2)		SA-21	AU-5	AC-3(9)	AC-6(10)	PE-6	AC-20	SC-23	CM-8(1)	AC-4(15)	CP-2
CM-1	CM-4(1)	CM-8(3)	CM-7(5)	AU-4			AU-5(1)	AC-6	AC-8	PE-6(1)	AC-20(1)	SC-28	CM-8(2)	AC-4(17)	CP-2(1)
CP-1	CM-5(2)	CM-8(5)	CM-8	AU-5			AU-5(2)	AC-6(3)	AC-16	PE-6(4)	AC-20(2)	SC-28(1)	CM-8(3)	AC-4(18)	CP-2(2)
IA-1	CM-5(3)	IA-4	CM-8(1)	AU-5(1)			AU-6	AC-6(7)	AC-17(4)	PE-8	AC-20(3)	SI-7(6)	CM-8(4)	AC-5	CP-2(3)
IR-1	IR-3	MA-3	CM-8(2)	AU-5(2)			AU-9(4)	AC-6(10)	AU-12(3)	PE-8(1)	CA-3		CM-8(5)	AC-6	CP-2(4)
IR-7	IR-3(2)	MA-3(1)	CM-8(3)	AU-6(1)			AU-12(3)	AC-7	CM-8(4)	PE-9	CA-3(5)		CP-2	AC-6(1)	CP-2(5)
MA-1	IR-5	MA-3(3)	CM-8(4)	AU-6(3)			CM-6(2)	AC-9	IA-1	PE-10	CA-9		CP-2(1)	AC-6(2)	CP-2(8)
MA-2(2)	IR-6	MA-6	CM-8(5)	AU-6(5)			CP-3	AC-9(1)	IA-2	PE-11	IA-2(4)		CP-2(2)	AC-6(7)	CP-4
MA-4(2)	IR-6(1)	MP-6(8)	CM-10	AU-6(6)			IA-2	AC-10	IA-2(1)	PE-11(1)	MA-4		CP-2(3)	AC-6(9)	CP-4(1)
MP-1	IR-10	MP-7(1)	CM-11	AU-7			IA-4	AC-11	IA-2(2)	PE-12	MA-4(3)		CP-2(4)	AC-9	CP-4(2)
PE-1	MA-3	PE-16	MA-3(1)	AU-7(1)			IR-2	AC-11(1)	IA-2(3)	PE-13	SA-9		CP-2(5)	AC-20	CP-4(4)

Visit [fedramp.gov](https://fedramp.gov) to read our full

[Threat Based Risk Profiling Methodology White Paper](#)



# THANK YOU

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Questions?