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CASE STUDY

Guiding a Mid-Sized
Manufacturer to a Perfect
CMMC Level 2 Score

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Overview

A mid-sized U.S. manufacturing company serving the defense industrial base partnered with Ancora Cyber to achieve CMMC Level 2 compliance and successfully pass a C3PAO certification assessment. The client had no existing documentation, limited cybersecurity governance, and faced contract obligations that required full compliance within a strict timeframe.

With Ancora Cyber's strategic guidance, expert program development, and oversight of their IT Managed Service Provider (MSP), the client reached full CMMC Level 2 readiness in 10 months and earned a perfect 110/110 score during their assessment.

Challenges

The manufacturer approached Ancora Cyber with a critical need:

"We must go from zero cybersecurity program to fully CMMC Level 2 compliant, and we need to pass the certification in less than a year."

Their environment presented several challenges:

- ✓ No existing System Security Plan (SSP) or cybersecurity program
- ✓ No prior exposure to NIST 800-171 or CMMC
- ✓ A mix of aging OT systems and modern IT infrastructure
- ✓ Heavy reliance on an MSP for technical security operations
- ✓ High-stakes defense contracts dependent on certification

Ancora Cyber was engaged to build the governance framework, develop all required documentation, guide the MSP through proper technical implementation, and prepare the client for assessment success.

Solutions

Program Development & Documentation Creation

Ancora Cyber led the full development of the client's cybersecurity program, creating all required documentation for CMMC Level 2, including:

- Ancora Cyber did all the heavy lifting and delivered a complete, audit-ready System Security Plan (SSP)
- All supporting policies, procedure, plans, and governance documents
- Defined operational processes for evidence generation and program maintenance
- Documentation aligned with all 110 practices and 320 assessment objectives

This comprehensive documentation suite provided the blueprint for both compliance and ongoing cyber governance.

Strategic Advisory for Technical Control Implementation

While the MSP handled all technical control deployment, Ancora Cyber provided:

- Clear control interpretation
- Detailed technical implementation guidance
- Priority remediation sequencing
- Clarification of assessment expectations
- Ongoing Q&A support for IT leadership and MSP technicians

We ensured that controls were implemented correctly, consistently, and defensibly, without performing the technical work ourselves. This collaborative triad, client leadership, MSP engineers, and Ancora Cyber, drove rapid progress.

Evidence Mapping & Audit Preparation

Ancora Cyber completed the full evidence alignment effort, including:

- Mapping artifacts to each of the 320 assessment objectives
- Creating narrative explanations for control intent and operation
- Establishing evidence collection standards for the MSP and internal teams
- Organizing and structuring an auditor-friendly evidence repository

Our work ensured every practice could be demonstrated cleanly and confidently.

Assessment Readiness & Team Coaching

As the assessment approached, Ancora Cyber led all readiness activities:

- Mock assessment sessions
- Control-owner and SME interview coaching
- Executive-level preparation for C3PAO interactions
- Final review of evidence, SSP, and supporting artifacts
- Walkthrough drills for environment scoping and system explanations

This coaching eliminated surprises and ensured staff were fully prepared to speak to their roles and responsibilities

Our Approach

Ancora Cyber applies a structured, repeatable CMMC compliance methodology grounded in:

- ✔ NIST SP 800-171
- ✔ CMMC Assessment Guide
- ✔ Proven audit-readiness best practices

Scoping & Boundary Definition

We worked with leadership and IT/MSP teams to define CUI boundaries and ensure all relevant systems and processes were captured.

Governance-First Program Development

We built the policies, procedures, and governance framework necessary to support the technical controls.

MSP Enablement & Guidance

We translated compliance requirements into actionable technical guidance for the MSP, ensuring alignment with CMMC expectations.

Assessment Preparation

We facilitated internal reviews, evidence validation, and team coaching to ensure a disciplined, confident assessment experience.

Results

In just 10 months, the client achieved:

✔ CMMC Level 2 certification with a perfect 110/110 score

✔ Zero deficiencies or corrective actions

✔ High praise from the C3PAO for documentation clarity and evidence organization

✔ Retained eligibility for defense contracts

✔ A sustainable, repeatable cybersecurity program

Ancora Cyber empowered the client and their MSP to build a fully compliant environment while maintaining efficient manufacturing operations.

Fast-Forward

Today, the manufacturer continues to rely on Ancora Cyber's Continuous Support Services for:

- Annual NIST 800-171 self-assessments
- Policy and program updates on a cadence and rhythm
- Evidence refresh cycles
- MSP advisory and control guidance
- Readiness preparation for future C3PAO engagements

With Ancora Cyber as their long-term compliance partner, the organization maintains confidence, stability, and competitiveness within the defense supply chain.

Start With a Mapping Conversation

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