

# Cna Cyber Self Assessment Primer



## CNA Cyber Self-Assessment Primer: Required Minimum Practices

- 1. Does your firm have a virus protection program and firewall in place?**  
RMP: Implement virus controls and filtering on all systems, servers, or controls include:
  - a. Installing antivirus software on all systems.
  - b. Implementing a process to keep antivirus programs up to date, including automatic update of virus signatures if possible.
  - c. Filtering e-mail attachments and downloads to reject files with the following extensions: .exe, .dll, .bat, .pif, .scr.
  - d. Disabling unwanted scripts and scripts including file transfer protocol (FTP) services and scripts (scripted protocols).
  - e. Training employees not to open e-mail attachments or click on Internet links provided unless messages unless the message is expected and/or from a known and authorized source.
  - i. Scanning antivirus scans on all e-mail attachments, files and downloads before the file is opened.
  - g. Running a commercially available product specifically designed to function as employee software. At a minimum, run a monthly full scan of all devices attached to your network.
  - h. Disabling any non-essential network file sharing capabilities. If file sharing is necessary, create a dedicated directory for file sharing, password protect these shared files, and restrict user to "read only" if possible.
- 2. Does your firm implement security software updates in a timely manner?**  
RMP: Subscribe to vendor patch notification services for all software and systems at least, review and evaluate at least weekly, preferably daily. Where possible, enable automatic update capabilities. Test, and install critical security patches and upgrades within 28 hours of availability, and all other patches within 30 days.
- 3. Does your firm replace all factory default settings to ensure your information security systems are configured securely?**  
RMP: Implement policies regarding the configuration of all network security devices and systems:
  - a. Avoid default configurations, and implement specific procedures for the management of strong administrative passwords or passphrases for those devices and systems.
  - b. Update policies as new vulnerabilities arise or network configurations change.
  - c. The default policy for a firewall handling inbound traffic should be to block all packets and connections unless the traffic type and connections are specifically permitted.
- 4. Does your firm control access to information that resides on data storage devices such as servers, desktops, laptops, external storage devices, and mobile devices?**  
RMP: Regarding confidential or sensitive information accessible within your company:
  - a. Define access controls based on "need to know" or "least privilege", which refers to granting only the access required by users to perform their duties.
  - b. Currently administer access to limit access to confidential or sensitive information.
  - c. Establish separation of duties to prevent individuals from subverting access controls.
  - d. Implement written procedures to change user access privileges immediately upon changes in a user's position or authority.
  - e. Implement written procedures to terminate user access privileges when employment is terminated. If employment is being terminated for cause, revoke privileges concurrently with notifying the employee of termination.
- 5. Does your firm have a password usage policy?**  
RMP: Maintain an actively updated written policy on creating and using passwords or passphrases. Update the policy annually to reflect current best practices, such as those published by the National Institute of Standards and Technology.
- 6. Does your firm ensure that sufficient safeguards are in place for the transmission and storage of data?**  
RMP: Authenticate and encrypt all remote access to your network, including user identification and strong passwords or passphrases. A Virtual Private Network (VPN) is the most common method to provide the protection. As part of your security policy, require all remote connections to occur via VPN and require two-factor authentication to confirm a user's identity.
- 7. Does your firm monitor user accounts to identify and eliminate inactive users?**  
RMP: Maintain a written policy or required procedures to eliminate inactive user accounts, and utilize software that automatically identifies and disables such accounts in accordance with the policy.
- 8. Does your firm control access to information that can be deployed, printed, or otherwise downloaded to external storage devices?**  
RMP: Maintain a written policy regarding storage of company data on portable devices, and utilize technical methods to prevent data leakage such as disabling or monitoring usage of USB ports, content sharing, and use of network monitoring software. All sensitive data should be encrypted.  
Additional practices for USB, hard drive, and removable storage devices
- 9. Does your company have a documented information technology business continuity and disaster recovery program for your business? If yes, is it tested periodically?**  
RMP: Incorporate into your current business continuity plan actions to take and regularly test them back at least annually. Consider your company's unique needs, take inventory of your operational needs, for one week, and then one month. Include day-to-day operations, human resources, operating manuals, supporting software and hardware, plus backup facilities in the process.

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## CNA Cyber Self Assessment Primer

In the rapidly evolving landscape of cybersecurity, organizations must adopt a proactive approach to assess and enhance their cyber defenses. The CNA Cyber Self Assessment Primer serves as a valuable resource for organizations seeking to evaluate their cybersecurity posture, identify potential vulnerabilities, and implement effective strategies to mitigate risks. This article delves into the key components of the CNA Cyber Self Assessment Primer, its significance, methodology, and best practices for organizations looking to strengthen their cybersecurity frameworks.

## Understanding the CNA Cyber Self Assessment Primer

The CNA Cyber Self Assessment Primer is a structured framework designed to help organizations, especially those in the critical infrastructure sector, evaluate their cybersecurity capabilities. It provides a comprehensive guide for assessing existing security measures, identifying gaps, and developing actionable strategies to enhance overall resilience against cyber threats.

## Purpose of the Cyber Self Assessment Primer

The primary purpose of the CNA Cyber Self Assessment Primer is to:

- 1. Facilitate Self-Evaluation:** Organizations can conduct a thorough self-

assessment of their cybersecurity measures, which is crucial for understanding their current security posture.

2. Identify Vulnerabilities: By following the assessment framework, organizations can uncover weaknesses in their cybersecurity protocols and practices.

3. Promote Continuous Improvement: The primer encourages organizations to adopt a mindset of continuous improvement, enabling them to evolve their cybersecurity strategies in response to emerging threats.

4. Enhance Compliance: Organizations can align their cybersecurity practices with industry standards and regulatory requirements, ensuring compliance and reducing legal risks.

## **Key Components of the CNA Cyber Self Assessment Primer**

The CNA Cyber Self Assessment Primer is structured around several key components that guide organizations through the assessment process. These components include:

1. Risk Assessment: Understanding potential risks is the foundation of effective cybersecurity. Organizations must identify and evaluate risks to their critical assets, services, and data. This involves:
  - Conducting a thorough inventory of assets.
  - Identifying potential threats and vulnerabilities.
  - Evaluating the impact and likelihood of various risk scenarios.
2. Cybersecurity Policies and Procedures: Organizations should have clear policies and procedures governing their cybersecurity practices. This includes:
  - Establishing a formal cybersecurity policy.
  - Developing incident response and recovery plans.
  - Ensuring policies are regularly reviewed and updated.
3. Awareness and Training: Human factors are often the weakest link in cybersecurity. Organizations must invest in:
  - Regular training programs for employees on cybersecurity best practices.
  - Phishing simulations and awareness campaigns to educate staff.
4. Technology and Tools: Assessing the effectiveness of current technologies and tools is critical. Organizations should:
  - Evaluate the security of hardware and software.
  - Implement advanced security measures such as encryption and intrusion detection systems.
5. Monitoring and Incident Response: Continuous monitoring of systems and networks is essential for early detection of threats. This component involves:
  - Establishing a security operations center (SOC) for real-time monitoring.
  - Developing a robust incident response plan to address security breaches.
6. Vendor and Third-Party Risk Management: Organizations must assess the cybersecurity practices of their vendors and third parties, as they can introduce vulnerabilities. This includes:
  - Conducting due diligence on third-party providers.

- Implementing contractual obligations for cybersecurity standards.

## **Methodology for Conducting the Assessment**

Conducting a CNA Cyber Self Assessment requires a systematic approach. Organizations can follow these steps to effectively execute the assessment:

### **Step 1: Define Objectives**

Establish clear objectives for the assessment. Determine what the organization hopes to achieve, such as identifying vulnerabilities, enhancing compliance, or improving overall security posture.

### **Step 2: Assemble a Team**

Create a cross-functional team responsible for the assessment. This team should include members from IT, security, compliance, legal, and other relevant departments to ensure a comprehensive evaluation.

### **Step 3: Gather Information**

Collect relevant documentation, including existing cybersecurity policies, incident reports, and compliance records. Interview key personnel to gain insights into current practices and challenges.

### **Step 4: Conduct the Assessment**

Utilize the CNA Cyber Self Assessment Primer framework to conduct the assessment. Evaluate each component, identify strengths and weaknesses, and document findings.

### **Step 5: Analyze Results**

After completing the assessment, analyze the results to identify key vulnerabilities and areas for improvement. Prioritize risks based on their potential impact and likelihood.

### **Step 6: Develop an Action Plan**

Create a detailed action plan that outlines specific steps the organization will take to address identified vulnerabilities. The plan should include timelines, responsible parties, and resource requirements.

## **Step 7: Monitor and Review**

Cybersecurity is an ongoing process. Establish a regular review cycle to monitor progress, reassess risks, and update the assessment as necessary.

## **Best Practices for Effective Cyber Self Assessment**

To maximize the effectiveness of the CNA Cyber Self Assessment, organizations should consider the following best practices:

1. **Engage Leadership:** Involve senior leadership in the assessment process to ensure buy-in and support for cybersecurity initiatives.
2. **Foster a Security Culture:** Encourage a culture of security throughout the organization. Make cybersecurity a shared responsibility among all employees.
3. **Leverage Automation:** Utilize automated tools and software to streamline the assessment process, collect data, and monitor systems.
4. **Stay Informed:** Keep abreast of the latest cybersecurity trends, threats, and best practices. Continuous learning is essential in the ever-changing cyber landscape.
5. **Collaborate with Peers:** Join industry groups and forums to share experiences, learn from others, and stay informed about emerging threats and solutions.

## **Conclusion**

The CNA Cyber Self Assessment Primer is an essential tool for organizations seeking to enhance their cybersecurity posture. By following the structured framework and methodology outlined in the primer, organizations can effectively evaluate their cybersecurity capabilities, identify vulnerabilities, and develop actionable strategies to mitigate risks. Embracing continuous improvement and fostering a culture of security will empower organizations to navigate the complex cybersecurity landscape with confidence. As cyber threats continue to evolve, proactive self-assessment and adaptation are vital for sustaining resilience and safeguarding critical assets.

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **What is the purpose of the CNA Cyber Self Assessment Primer?**

The CNA Cyber Self Assessment Primer is designed to help organizations evaluate their cyber security posture and identify areas for improvement to enhance their overall cyber resilience.

## **Who should use the CNA Cyber Self Assessment Primer?**

The primer is intended for organizations of all sizes, particularly those in critical infrastructure sectors, to assess their cyber security practices and implement necessary changes.

## **How does the CNA Cyber Self Assessment Primer differ from other cyber assessments?**

The CNA Cyber Self Assessment Primer focuses on self-evaluation, providing organizations with a structured approach to assess their own cyber security measures rather than relying solely on external audits.

## **What key areas does the CNA Cyber Self Assessment Primer cover?**

The primer covers key areas such as risk management, incident response, access control, and security awareness training, helping organizations to comprehensively evaluate their cyber security strategies.

## **Is the CNA Cyber Self Assessment Primer suitable for small businesses?**

Yes, the CNA Cyber Self Assessment Primer is suitable for small businesses as it provides a flexible framework that can be adapted to their specific needs and resources.

## **How can organizations implement the findings from the CNA Cyber Self Assessment Primer?**

Organizations can implement the findings by prioritizing identified vulnerabilities, developing a remediation plan, allocating resources for improvement, and continually reviewing their cyber security practices.

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