



Navigating Government Sector Compliance: CMMC and GCC High



In the world of government sector compliance there are two acronyms that have received a lot of attention – CMMC and GCC High. These acronyms are not just industry jargon; they hold importance for government agencies as they navigate their operations.

In this blog post we aim to provide an understanding of what CMMC compliance entails and address any concerns regarding the costs associated with [Microsoft GCC licenses](#). So, let's explore the realm of government sector compliance, where data security and regulatory adherence play a role.

To make it even simpler for you to grasp these terms, look at the image below, which provides an overview:

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What is GCC High and What Does it Stand for?

Microsoft 365 Government Community Cloud (GCC) High is a cloud platform developed by Microsoft. This means that Microsoft operates this cloud solution, within its data centers spread across the United States. Moreover, it offers capabilities to ensure compliance requirements when handling Controlled Unclassified Information (CUI).

It's worth mentioning that the Microsoft 365 suite includes GCC High. It acts as a complement to Microsoft Azure Government, which serves as the foundation for building IT infrastructures. GCC High is utilized by Department of Defense contractors and those who are part of the Defense Industrial Base (DIB) to safeguard government data. It effectively manages CUI, CTI and ITAR.

Is there a difference between GCC and GCC High?

The key contrast between Microsoft GCC and GCC High boils down to where they keep your important data or CUI. Microsoft GCC High relies on Microsoft's US Sovereign Cloud. This is based in the US and can only be reached by Microsoft staff who are U.S. citizens with special clearances. On the flip side, GCC shares the same cloud as Microsoft's regular commercial services and is accessible to Microsoft personnel worldwide.

Microsoft GCC and GCC High are both extra-secure versions of the familiar Microsoft 365 used in everyday office setups. These two options cover a lot of the bases to complying with regulations like DFARS 7012 and CMMC. However, it's crucial to understand the distinctions between them and how they impact DoD contractors striving to stay compliant.

What is CMMC?

Cybersecurity Maturity Model Certification or (CMMC) is a U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) initiative that is relevant to Defense Industrial Base (DIB) contractors. It acts as a cohesive standard and certification framework to make sure that DoD contractors correctly safeguard sensitive information.

CMMC will guarantee that your cybersecurity strategy encompasses ongoing surveillance and enhancements to deter any potential malicious actors. By adhering to CMMC's cybersecurity risk management procedures, you can validate essential cybersecurity compliance measures. This is especially critical for safeguarding Controlled Unclassified Information (CUI) and Federal Contract Information (FCI).

Currently, DoD contractors are the only ones required to comply with CMMC. The DoD, however, is progressively introducing certification requirements for specific contracts. In the future, CMMC might extend to encompass all government contractors outside the DoD as well.

Do you have any CMMC compliance inquiries?

Explore ECF Data's Government IT Services by clicking the link below.

Does CMMC require GCC High?

A simple answer to that question is no.

But you will require GCC High if you handle, generate, or possess any of the following types of information:

- **Specified CUI mandating US Sovereignty**
- **Controlled Defense Information**
- **CUI marked NOFORN**
- **Export Administration Regulations (EAR)**
- **Export Controlled CUI**
- **Federal Criminal Justice Information Systems**
- **Nuclear Information (FERC/NERC)**
- **NASA-related information**
- **International Traffic in Arms Regulations (ITAR)**

This is not an exhaustive list of information types necessitating GCC High. Rather, these are the information types that consistently demand GCC High compliance.

Also, the following features establish Microsoft 365 GCC High as a premier choice for organizations that handle Controlled Unclassified Information (CUI):

- Most teams already are familiar with the Microsoft 365 suite, making the transition even easier.

- Moving between different cloud environments necessitates a complete migration process. So, choosing GCC High now can save you time and effort if you anticipate dealing with Controlled Unclassified Information (CUI) in the future.
- If your organization currently manages or foresees the handling of export-controlled data regulated by ITAR or EAR, the suitable choice is GCC High. The standard commercial and GCC (non-High) versions of Office 365 lack the capability to support export-controlled information.

How to get GCC license?

To position your company for Department of Defense contract bids, full compliance with CMMC certification requirements is mandatory. Navigating each individual practice and the essential steps for successful assessment can be a complex and overwhelming process. There's no need for you to be in this alone.

ECF Data is thrilled to announce that we've earned Microsoft's trust as an AOS-G partner. This means we're authorized to offer pricing, licensing, migration assistance, and ongoing support for Azure Government and GCC High. This caters to a wide range of government entities, including Federal, State, and Local Governments. We're also here to assist DoD Contractors and the agencies that support them.

Our team at [ECF Data](#) is well-prepared to support the defense industry in adapting to the latest [Cyber Security](#) Maturity Model Certification requirements. We're excited to be part of this critical mission.

Get in touch with us to connect with one of our team members and gain a deeper understanding of how we can assist you in addressing all your CMMC compliance concerns.

[FREE SECURITY ASSESSMENT](#)