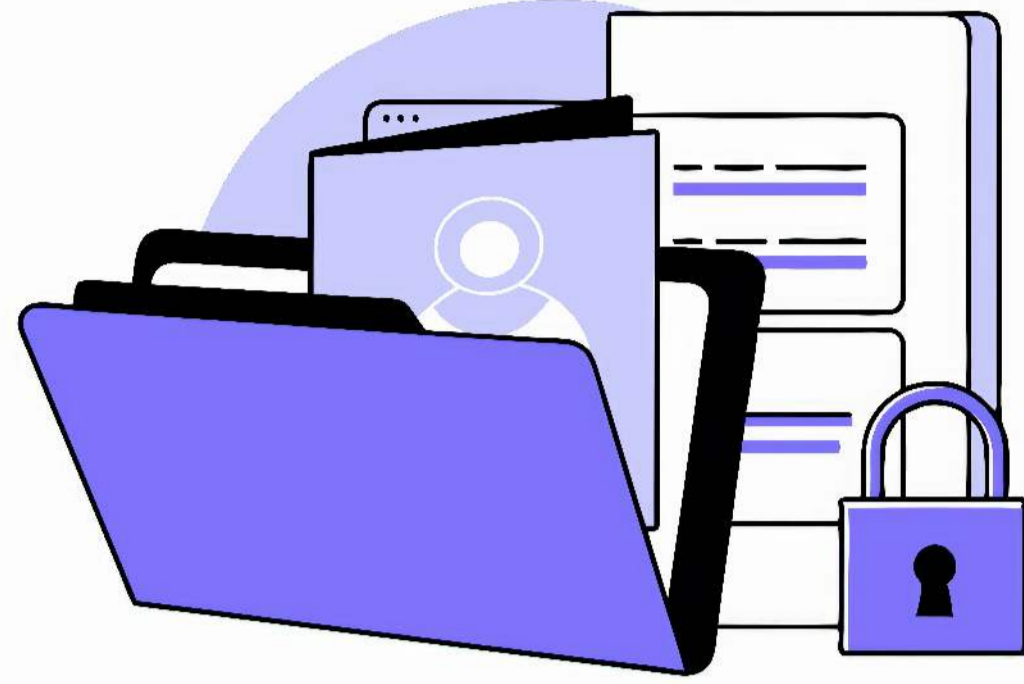




AG GRACE INC



Simplify Your CMMC Journey



Visualize to Secure: The Power of Data Flow Diagrams in CMMC Compliance

When it comes to CMMC, documentation is everything — and few documents are as critical or overlooked as the **Data Flow Diagram (DFD)**.

This isn't just a box-and-arrow sketch. A well-crafted DFD is your **roadmap to securing Controlled Unclassified Information (CUI)** and proving to assessors that you understand your system boundaries, risks, and controls.

What is a Data Flow Diagram (DFD)?

A Data Flow Diagram **maps how data moves** through your systems:

- **Where CUI originates**
- **Who accesses it**
- **Where it's stored**
- **How it's transmitted and processed**

It clearly outlines **network boundaries, system components, external connections, and trust zones** — all of which are essential to CMMC Level 2 assessments.

Why DFDs Matter for CMMC

✔ Defines System Boundaries

CMMC assessments require a clearly scoped environment. Your DFD is how you define and **defend the boundaries** of that scope.

✔ Supports the SSP

DFDs back up the **System Security Plan** by visualizing what's described in writing — making it easier for assessors to follow.

✔ Identifies Security Gaps

By seeing how data actually moves, you can spot **unsecured pathways, shadow IT, or unauthorized access points** before an assessor does.

✔ Facilitates Control Mapping

Need to show how you limit access, encrypt data, or enforce MFA? Your DFD helps map **technical controls** to data flows and endpoints.

What to Include in a Strong DFD

- **Data Sources & Destinations:** Internal systems, users, third parties, cloud services
- **Transmission Paths:** Wired, wireless, VPNs, APIs, external links
- **Storage Locations:** Servers, databases, cloud storage, removable media
- **CUI Identification:** Clearly mark where CUI is created, stored, processed, or transmitted
- **Security Zones:** DMZs, internal networks, isolated enclaves, etc.

🔗 **Pro Tip:** Use color-coding to distinguish trusted/untrusted zones and CUI vs. FCI.

DFD Pitfalls to Avoid

- ⊘ Overcomplicating the diagram – keep it clear, high-level, and readable
- ⊘ Leaving out mobile devices or cloud connections
- ⊘ Failing to update it as systems evolve
- ⊘ Not validating the diagram with your technical team

Recommended Tools

- **Draw.io / Diagrams.net** (Free & easy)
- **Lucidchart** (Collaborative, great for teams)
- **Microsoft Visio** (Formal, widely used in audits)

Next in the Series:

"Creating a Secure CUI Environment: What the Enclave Approach Looks Like" – Coming soon!

Need help building or reviewing your DFD?
[schedule a free consultation](#) with our CMMC consulting team or email us solutions@aggrace.com or call 240-315-6828 | www.aggrace.com

Cybersecurity Consultant | CMMC Specialist



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