

Client – Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, or FERC, is an independent agency that regulates the interstate transmission of electricity, natural gas, and oil. FERC also reviews proposals to build liquefied natural gas (LNG) terminals and interstate natural gas pipelines as well as licensing hydropower projects. To meet this mission, the FERC maintains information about the national critical infrastructure and makes governance decisions that significantly influence the energy markets.

The Challenge

The FERC had received an 'F' grade on their FISMA scorecard and needed to improve their information security posture as quickly as possible, while minding the budget. At the same time, HSPD-12 deadlines loomed and they needed answers.

The Solution

Upon assessment of the environment, Litmus Logic realized that FERC had already deployed many enterprise-grade security products. What was missing was the policy and repeatable management and administrative processes. Within 9 months Litmus Logic updated the enterprise security plan to the 800-53 specification, established a C&A methodology, established risk management and data categorization processes, and performed the compliance preparation for the IG's annual FISMA audit. The FERC was at a 'B' grade within that 9 month period. In the second 9 month period we raised the bar to an 'A' grade by adding contingency plan testing and stabilized the operations through training to ensure sustained compliance once we departed.

To address HSPD-12 deadlines, Litmus formed and led a cross matrix team with key staff from the HR, IT infrastructure, IT Security, and Physical Security groups. Together we developed the first PIV-I operations plan, project milestones, and a matrix of all compliance requirements. Armed with this information, we solicited responses from key product vendors to determine if a turnkey solution could be fielded in time. The team reviewed our options and determined that the best approach would be to implement PIV-I and wait for the GSA managed service to implement PIV-II.

The Result

The FERC continues to sustain their security program an "A" on their FISMA scorecard, and was one of the few agencies to be compliant with PIV-I on time.

The FERC was extremely pleased with our work and issued a certificate of special recognition to Litmus for going above and beyond all expectations. The government employees were also awarded with monetary bonuses as well.