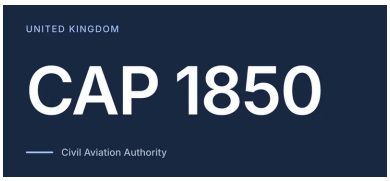
SmartSuite

Framework / Cybersecurity / Other

CAP 1850 Cyber Assessment Framework (CAF) for Aviation, version 2

CAP 1850 is the UK CAA's guidance for the Cyber Assessment Framework for Aviation: 4 objectives, 14 principles and 39 outcomes, assessed per critical system and audited under ASSURE.



What it is

CAP 1850, Cyber Assessment Framework (CAF) for Aviation, is the UK Civil Aviation Authority guidance on completing the CAF for Aviation self-assessment workbook and the Statement of Assurance that aviation organizations submit under the CAA's Cyber Security Oversight Process (CAP 1753). The CAF for Aviation was adapted from the NCSC's CAF v3.0 and assesses 14 principles across four objectives through 39 contributing outcomes. CAP 1850 is version 2, dated August 19, 2020 (first published October 2019), and the CAA lists it as current.

The CAA notifies each organization that falls in scope of CAP 1753, either as an operator of essential services under the Network and Information Systems Regulations 2018 (Tier 1) or as a directed UK aerodrome or air carrier under the NASP, the UK aviation security regime (Tiers 2 and 3). Each organization receives a profile at the first stage, engagement, naming the outcomes it is expected to meet, and nominates a Cyber Security Responsible Manager.

At a glance

PUBLISHER
UK Civil Aviation Authority (CAA), developed with the Department for Transport and the NCSC

TYPE
Regulation

VERSION
Version 2

EFFECTIVE
August 19, 2020 (version 2)

DOMAIN
Cybersecurity

FAMILY
Other

REGION
United Kingdom

INDUSTRY
Aerospace & Defense

ADOPTION MODEL
Regulatory Compliance

IMPLEMENTATION COMPLEXITY
High

Source: caa.co.uk/data-and-publications/publications/documents/content/cap1850/

Why it matters

- **Outcome-based, not a checklist** Section 2.2 says the CAF is not meant to be inflexible or applied as a checklist, and alternative methods that meet an outcome are accepted.
- **A target set for you** The CAA assigns an expected profile, so the organization is not expected to score Achieved on every contributing outcome.
- **Evidence an auditor can test** Each outcome carries an evidence tracker so the ASSURE audit can check the documents behind every Indicator of Good Practice marked.
- **Critical systems, not the whole estate** Assessment is per critical system, with organizational outcomes such as A1 Board Direction completed once on the first tab.

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How SmartSuite supports CAP 1850

Contributing Outcome Library

Load the four objectives, 14 principles and 39 contributing outcomes as requirements, with the assigned profile and the status for each critical system.

Critical System Register

Record each critical system in scope, its owner and the CAP 1849 scoping decision, and link the systems that share the same outcomes.

Evidence Tracker

Attach policies, board minutes and role assignments to each Indicator of Good Practice and track document title, version and location for the ASSURE audit.

Supply Chain Assessments

Assess the suppliers that run critical systems in Third Party Risk Management, supporting outcome A4.

Corrective Action Plan

Track each gap with inherent, current and residual risk, owner, resourcing, start and completion dates, and the 30-day change notice.

Incident Response and Recovery

Link the D1 and D2 outcomes to incident records, tested response plans and lessons-learned actions in Operational Resilience & Business Continuity.

Common framework mappings

CIS Controls v8.1 | ISO 27001:2022 | NIST CSF 2.0 | NIST 800-53 Rev.5 | SOC 2 | Cyber Essentials

Official resources

Cyber Assessment Framework (CAF) for Aviation – CAP 1850

Provides guidance for completing the Cyber Assessment Framework tailored to aviation operations.

caa.co.uk/publication/download/17540

CAP 1849: Cyber Security Critical Systems Scoping Guidance

The CAA's guidance on scoping the critical systems that an aviation organization assesses with the CAF for Aviation.

caa.co.uk/data-and-publications/publications/documents/content/cap1849

CAP 1753: The Cyber Security Oversight Process for Aviation

Describes the CAA's primary oversight process for assessing cybersecurity in safety-critical aviation systems.

caa.co.uk/publication/download/21585

Frequently asked questions

What is CAP 1850 and how does it relate to CAP 1753?

CAP 1850 is the CAA's guidance on completing the Cyber Assessment Framework for Aviation workbook and the Statement of Assurance (section 1). CAP 1753 is the Cyber Security Oversight Process that tells an in-scope organization when to use them, through eight stages from engagement to ongoing oversight.

How is the CAF for Aviation structured?

Section 2.1 describes four objectives, 14 principles and 39 contributing outcomes. Each outcome is judged against Indicators of Good Practice in Achieved, Partially Achieved and Not Achieved columns, and the CAF was adapted from the NCSC core CAF v3.0.

How does the assessment and audit work?

The organization self-assesses each critical system on up to 25 assessment tabs, logging evidence and any alternative methods (section 4). An accredited ASSURE Cyber Professional then audits the self-assessment, and the CAA can undertake the audit instead in exceptional circumstances (CAP 1753, Stage 5).

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Who has to use the CAF for Aviation?

Organizations the CAA notifies as in scope of CAP 1753 under the Network and Information Systems Regulations 2018 (Tier 1, operators of essential services) or the NASP, the UK aviation security regime (Tiers 2 and 3, directed UK aerodromes and air carriers). CAP 1753 recommends that others apply proportionate good practice.

What happens if the audit finds gaps?

The organization writes a corrective action plan against its assigned profile (section 5), which the CAA reviews within 60 days under CAP 1753, notifies of changes within 30 days and reports on quarterly. CAP 3120 sets the enforcement approach for non-compliance, starting with notification and corrective actions and escalating where needed.

License included / downloadable: Yes CAP 1850 is a free PDF on the CAA website. The CAA permits copying and use of its text provided the most up to date version is used, in context so as not to be misleading, and the CAA is credited.

Full framework page and mappings: smartsuite.com/frameworks/uk-cap-1850-cyber-assessment-framework-for-aviation