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From the **Towerwall** Team

As organizations close out the year, cybersecurity leaders face a familiar but growing challenge: keeping pace with real-world risk while managing compliance expectations, emerging threats, and limited resources.

This month's newsletter focuses on **moving beyond static checklists**, understanding **operational risks like outages and phishing**, and highlighting how **long-term partnerships and education** strengthen security programs heading into 2026.

News & Thought Leadership

Beyond the Checklist: Why Real-Time Risk Assessments Matter

Traditional compliance frameworks provide necessary structure—but they weren't designed to keep up with today's constantly evolving threat landscape.

In his recent article, **Greg Neville, CISO and VP of Towerwall Cyber Consulting Services**, explains why organizations must move beyond annual, framework-driven assessments and adopt **dynamic, threat-focused risk assessments** that align with real business impact.

Key takeaways include:

- The difference between **gap analysis vs. risk assessment**
- Why **static frameworks lag behind real threats**
- How **focused assessments (20 - 40 questions)** deliver faster, more actionable results
- The importance of cadence, as risk doesn't follow audit calendars

Risk assessments aren't checkboxes. They're decision-making tools that help leaders prioritize remediation, justify budgets, and demonstrate due diligence in real time.

[Read Greg's full article](#)

[Threat & Vulnerability Spotlight](#)

Internet Outages: The Overlooked Cyber Risk

Internet outages are often treated as an IT inconvenience, but their security impact is frequently underestimated.

Outages can:

- Disrupt security monitoring and logging
- Disable MFA, cloud access, and SaaS platforms
- Interrupt backup, recovery, and incident response processes
- Create blind spots during active threats

Whether caused by infrastructure failures, misconfigurations, or third-party provider issues, outages introduce **operational and security risk** that organizations must plan for, especially during peak holiday operations.

Resilient organizations build outage scenarios into risk assessments, ensuring continuity plans account for both **availability and security controls**.

[Valuable Insight:](#)

Traveling Soon? Watch Out for Airline Phishing Scams

Cybercriminals are taking advantage of peak travel season by sending **fake airline text messages** that appear to reference real flight numbers and cancellations.

Towerwall CEO **Michelle Drolet** recently highlighted this growing scam and shared simple steps employees and travelers can take to stay safe:


- Always verify flight changes through official airline apps or websites
- Avoid clicking unexpected links or calling phone numbers in texts
- Be cautious of urgent language designed to pressure quick decisions

Security awareness isn't limited to the office, **personal vigilance helps protect both individuals and organizations**.



[For ongoing security insights](#)

[Follow Michelle Drolet on LinkedIn](#)



Case Study: A Security Partnership Built on Objectivity and Trust

For **David Kiklis**, former CIO of biotech company Replimune, cybersecurity isn't optional, it's mission-critical.

For over two decades, **Towerwall** has served as a **trusted, objective cybersecurity partner**, conducting independent audits, guiding ISO 27001 compliance, and helping identify emerging risks without vendor bias.

"I need Towerwall to be objective versus the implementer," Kiklis explains. "Having Towerwall assess our state of compliance ensures we meet or exceed controls and can prove we weren't negligent."

Beyond audits, Towerwall's proactive guidance on niche security solutions and emerging threats has helped Kiklis stay ahead in a highly regulated industry where data integrity and IP protection are paramount.

This long-standing partnership demonstrates the value of **expertise, independence, and trust**, especially in environments where the stakes are high.

[Read the full case study](#)



Compliance & Regulatory Update: CMMC Enforcement Is Here: What to Know

CMMC is officially moving from preparation to **active enforcement**, making compliance a current (not future) requirement for organizations supporting federal contracts.

Key reminders:

✓ **Level 1 (FCI):**

Self-assessments required

✓ **Level 2 (CUI):**

Third-party assessments required, depending on contract update

Organizations that haven't started, or are relying on outdated assessments, face increased risk of noncompliance.

This shift reinforces the need for **current, defensible risk assessments** that align operational reality with regulatory expectations.

Events & Education

BrightTalk Session: Beat Deepfake & AI- Powered Attacks in 2026

As deepfakes and synthetic media continue to evolve, technical controls alone aren't enough.

You can now rewatch **James McQuiggan (KnowBe4)** and **Michelle Drolet (Towerwall CEO)** discuss:

- How deepfake attacks bypass traditional detection
- Why employee awareness is critical
- Practical steps to strengthen human-layer defenses

[Watch the replay now!](#)

Staying Resilient Into 2026

From real-time risk assessments to employee education, the strongest security programs are built on adaptability, clarity, and trusted partnerships.

As the year comes to a close, Towerwall remains committed to helping organizations move beyond checklists and build security programs that stand up to real-world threats.

[Book a consultation with Towerwall](#)

[Explore our Resource Center](#)

About Towerwall

Towerwall is a **trusted, woman-owned information security partner** serving organizations across industries including healthcare, retail,

education, technology, and financial services. For over 30 years, our mission has been to help organizations operationalize security, achieve compliance, and protect what matters most.



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