**Meeting Summary: NeoSystems Town Hall Meeting, 17 March 2021**

**Attendees: Mr. Ed Bassett, CISO, NeoSystems Corporation; Mr. Jeff Dalton, CEO of Broadsword Solutions Corporation**

**To hear the full meeting: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sBVFA-HuR7o**

Jeff Dalton is the president and CEO of Broadsword Solutions Corporation. The company is a process innovation firm that helps high-performance organizations using evidence-based frameworks like Agile and CMMI, to rapidly improve their performance. His background includes extensive work with the CMMI Institute. He writes and speaks on Agile methods. He's also a voluntary board member of the CMC Accreditation Body, where he's chairman of the accreditation and the credentialing committee.

Dalton says there are now Defense Industrial Base Cybersecurity Assessment Center (DIBCAC) and CMMC Third-Party Assessor Organization (C3PAO) assessments presently underway. He notes that this is a final step to becoming a CMMC a third-party assessment organization.

Ed Bassett then emphasized the challenges in rolling out CMMC to 300,000 defense industrial base (DIB) members within a five-year period. This, he exclaims, is rapidly expanding the ecosystem in which it will operate; many are busy bringing this challenge to fruition.

Jeff Dalton describes the credentialing framework he introduced to the accrediting board last June (which was received as a true challenge.)

The framework includes many different roles from Provisional Assessor (PA), to Certified Professional (CP), Registered Practitioner (RP), Registered Provider Organizations (RPOs), C3PAOs, Certified Assessors for levels one, two, and three, Certified Instructors, along with many prerequisites associated and educational requirements to produce 3,000 people who must be qualified to conduct these assessments. The result has been the formulation of a vastly distributed ecosystem - which they created in about a year - with all volunteers.

In the near term, Dalton says they will be staging a small business symposium to build awareness of CMMC certification requirements. "We're going to actually put on a small business working symposium with working groups, breakout sessions, speakers, (with Q and A) all for small businesses to deal with CMMC and flesh out their concerns," he says.

He says that now that the ecosystem's deployed, and people are starting to be officially certified, the time is right to roll out these symposiums. He also mentioned that they are establishing a credential of "Licensed Software Provider." These are companies and organizations that wish to align their software tools with the CMMC ecosystem to be part of this market that we've developed.

His vision of credentialed professionals will be intrinsic to this new proposed ecosystem. "We imagine that CPs will be employees of companies," he explains:

"They'll be independents who want to be assessors. And maybe some of the folks that have been RPs for the last eight or nine months will want to become CPs. But both of those programs will continue to exist. If you think of it in terms of a pipeline, because that's how I thought about it when I designed it, was we have to build a long term pipeline of people who are going to become assessors and instructors because we need thousands of them. So, CPs are directly in the pipeline to become Certified Assessors. It's a prerequisite. You have to do it. RPs are either people that want to do consulting and never want to be assessors or people that want to eventually be assessors after they gain a certain amount of experience, and they meet the prerequisites, which are high. So, the pipeline is RP, CP, CA1, C2, C3, C5, and then instructor, that's the pipeline. And in order to grow that long term, we had to start eight months ago. And that's what the RP program was about."

Ed Bassett then asked about some overarching concerns he's heard from DIB members about finding a provider/assessor to help them get to CMMC. Beyond the mechanics of getting companies assessed and certified, he asked, does the CMMC AB have a role beyond that with the larger ecosystem?

Jeff Dalton replied that the DOD owns the model and can monitor and control companies that use their logos and companies that make statements about their designation as RPOs, C3PAOs or their RPS or CAs or CPs.

"We have the ability to regulate that because they've signed onto our code of professional conduct," Dalton says. "And we have an ethics office that deals with that. To the greater community, I guess I would say you're free to market, deliver and sell anything you'd like, and we have no interest in controlling that. But if you join the ecosystem, it'll be good for you and good for everybody, and help make the market a lot more palatable and more affordable - which is why we developed a marketplace to begin with."

The discussion continued in further discerning CMMC and the context in which it is viewed (cybersecurity framework? ISO? CMMI?). Jeff Dalton clarified the similarities, differences, and overlaps of prevailing standards and frameworks and its relationship to achieving CMMC and how this new ecosystem will fit into that pathway. He also discussed documentation and documentation requirements.

Before the meeting wrapped up, Jeff Dalton took a few questions from attendees.