



Maria Thompson

Cybersecurity Risk Assessment in the State and Local Government Community

As a former state CIO Evaluating Cybersecurity risk is increasingly becoming a challenge. There is a plethora of tools, consultants, frameworks and thoughts regarding approaches. But increasingly, traditional methods of defense are failing. So, what are some of the new approaches that CISOs and Chief Risk Officers can undertake to ensure that dollars being spent are addressing the threat community?

Biography

Maria S. Thompson is the AWS State and Local Government's Cybersecurity Leader.

Maria brings to the state over 20 years of experience in information technology and cybersecurity. She served 20 years in the United States Marine Corps and retired as the cybersecurity chief/information assurance chief for the Marine Corps. Since then, she has served in numerous security roles such as certification and accreditation (C&A) lead for the Multi-National Forces – Iraq and senior security engineer in a joint military organization and federal agency. Maria joined the North Carolina Department of Information Technology in 2015 as the state's first Chief Risk and Security Officer. There she was instrumental in establishing the Whole of State Approach to Cyber. This included the development and implementation of the state's first Cyber Disruption Plan, and the Joint Cyber Task Force (JCTF). The JCTF is a partnership between private, public, academic and federal partners to support statewide operational impacts to critical infrastructure and mission critical services.

Maria has been a featured speaker and presenter at various events to include RSA and Israel HLS & Cyber Conference.

Maria earned her bachelor's degree in information systems management and also holds a master's degree in information technology. Maria's personal honors include receiving the 2007 National Security Agency's prestigious Rowlett Award for individual achievement in information assurance. Additionally, she received the 2008 Office of Secretary of Defense Certificate of Excellence for the implementation of an IA strategy for the Information Assurance Workforce. Most recently, Maria was selected as a winner of the 2018 Triangle Business Journal Women in Business Tech Star award, 2018 and 2021 State Scoop's 50 Award - State Cybersecurity Leader and was a recipient of the 2019 NASCIO Thomas Jarrett Cybersecurity Scholarship. Maria currently holds the following industry certifications: ISC2 CISSP, ISACA CRISC, National Security Agency IAM/IEM and AWS Cloud Certified Practitioner.