

Transition of Ownership from Telstra to Cyberhash for ClubCISO members

Context

ClubCISO was created to be a trusted, peer-led, non-commercial community for security leaders. Over time, it has grown into one of the most respected CISO forums globally, underpinned by trust, independence, and collective intelligence.

Following Telstra's announcement of its Connected 30 Strategy and portfolio refocus, it has become clear that ongoing ownership of ClubCISO is no longer strategically aligned with Telstra's future direction. To preserve the credibility, continuity, and long-term success of the community, Telstra has chosen to transition ownership of ClubCISO to Cyberhash, while maintaining ongoing sponsorship and advocacy throughout the transition period.

This transition is designed to be deliberate, transparent, and community-first—protecting what makes ClubCISO valuable while positioning it for sustainable growth.

Why is Telstra changing ownership?

Telstra Strategic Refocus

Earlier this year, Telstra launched its Connected 30 Strategy, a whole-of-Telstra, five-year plan designed to:

- Focus on connectivity leadership
- Innovate in digital infrastructure
- Simplify its portfolio
- Align more tightly to evolving customer and market needs

As part of this strategy:

Telstra International is committed to enhancing services by refocusing on areas where we have the strongest differentiation—connectivity and digital infrastructure.

Portfolio Simplification

To support this focus, Telstra has:

- Ceased delivery of all new Professional Services, Managed Services, and Project Services

- This applies across Security, Adaptive Networks, Cloud, and IoT

This is a strategic realignment—not a reduction in commitment to customers or partners—but it does materially change where Telstra can sustainably operate.

Implications for ClubCISO

Telstra’s refocus makes ongoing ownership of ClubCISO misaligned, even though its commitment to the cybersecurity ecosystem remains strong.

- Operating a CISO-focused security leadership community no longer aligns with Telstra’s simplified, connectivity-first portfolio
- Continuing ownership could unintentionally create ambiguity about Telstra’s role, intent, or future service direction
- Transitioning ownership ensures ClubCISO is future-fit, rather than constrained by structural misalignment

This decision is about doing the right thing for the community, not stepping away from it.

Protecting ClubCISO’s Credibility

Trust is the foundation

ClubCISO’s credibility rests on three pillars:

1. Peer leadership
2. Independence
3. Non-commercial intent

With Telstra exiting security services:

- Continued ownership risks confusion around intent, even if unintended
- Community trust depends not only on actions, but on perceived alignment

Transitioning ownership removes this ambiguity and reinforces ClubCISO’s founding principles.

Why Cyberhash is the right transition partner

Continuity, Stability, and Independence

Cyberhash has been selected as the transition partner to ensure stability rather than disruption.

Key factors include:

- Cyberhash is already a trusted and established presence in the UK and broader cyber community
- Manoj Bhatt, founder of Cyberhash, is known and trusted by many ClubCISO members
- Cyberhash's operating model supports:
 - Community independence
 - Peer-led governance
 - Non-commercial integrity

This structure allows ClubCISO to continue evolving without losing its identity, particularly after a prolonged period of uncertainty.

Telstra's Ongoing Relationship with ClubCISO

- While Telstra is exiting security services, security remains a critical enabler of connectivity
- Telstra continues to value CISO insight, collaboration, and thought leadership
- Telstra has committed to:
 - Ongoing support during the transition period
 - Advocacy for the community
 - Appropriate engagement that does not compromise independence

The transition enables Telstra to support ClubCISO in a way that aligns with its strategy, without creating confusion about commercial intent.

Other FAQs

Is Telstra leaving or withdrawing support from ClubCISO?

No. Telstra is **not walking away from the community**.

While ownership is transitioning, Telstra will remain a **supporter and advocate of ClubCISO** throughout the transition period. The change in ownership removes

ambiguity about Telstra's role while allowing continued, appropriate engagement that does not compromise independence.

Who is Manoj Bhatt and what will his role be?

Manoj Bhatt is the founder of Cyberhash and a well-established figure in the cyber and CISO community.

His role will be to:

- Support continuity and stability
- Protect community independence
- Ensure ClubCISO can continue to thrive on its own terms

Manoj Bhatt and Cyberhash already support a number of communities such as the UK Cyber Competitions with DSIT, various B-Sides, Cyber House Party, White Hat Ball and CSO awards.

Will ClubCISO remain independent?

Yes. Independence is non-negotiable and foundational to this transition. ClubCISO will have a commercial construct to ensure that it remains independent.

Safeguards include:

- Peer-led governance
 - Board oversight
 - Clear separation between community operations and any commercial activity
 - Member-first principles embedded into governance structures
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Does this introduce commercial influence from Cyberhash?

No.

The same safeguards that have protected ClubCISO's independence to date will continue. Cyberhash's role is focused on stewardship and enablement — not commercialisation of the community.

Will the branding change?

The branding may change to coincide with the relaunch of ClubCISO. Also, instead of the community being powered by Telstra International it will be powered by Cyberhash.

Will there be changes to governance or the Board?

The intention is to maintain continuity. Existing board members have been contacted to see if they wish to continue to support ClubCISO going forward. To ensure the success and continuity of the community, ClubCISO will be looking at selecting more Advisory Board members to join our journey.

What will change for members?

For most members, **very little**.

There will be:

- No sudden or disruptive changes
- No change to the peer-led nature of the community
- No change to ClubCISO's purpose or values

The transition will take place gradually over several months to prioritise stability.

Will my data, privacy, or membership be affected?

No.

Member data, privacy protections, and governance controls remain unchanged. All data handling will continue in line with existing policies, legal requirements, and oversight arrangements.

Before any data is transitioned members will be notified, and we will ensure that all data protection requirements are met.

How long will the transition take?

The transition is expected to take place over **several months (up to six)**.

This extended timeframe is intentional and allows for:

- Knowledge transfer
- Operational continuity

- Clear, transparent communication with members
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Is there a new strategy?

Recognising that the community has been a little stagnant over the last few months, the aim will not be to launch a new strategy. The aim over the next 6 months will be to transition ClubCISO from Telstra to Cyberhash and to reinvigorate the community.

A formal strategy will be communicated with the members however the immediate priority is to re-energise, re-invigorate and re-launch ClubCISO.

Will ClubCISO still use the Plek app?

Over the coming months, we intend to transition away from the Plek platform and evaluate a new solution. Since adopting the Plek app, engagement levels within the ClubCISO community have not met expectations. As technology has evolved, a broader range of more effective platforms is now available.

Any transition will be guided by clear communication and a well-defined understanding of the platform best suited to our members' needs. Options such as WhatsApp or Slack are currently being considered; however, no final decision has been made at this stage. Further updates will be shared once evaluation and planning are complete.

What are the objectives of ClubCISO?

ClubCISO does not seek to compete with other cyber security communities. Instead, over the coming months, we will actively signpost relevant communities and their events to provide greater value to our members.

While ClubCISO will continue to host its own events, a core objective of the community is to inform members about a wide range of industry events and, where possible, enable exclusive access for ClubCISO members.

Our ambition is for ClubCISO to serve as a trusted, central hub for cyber security leaders—while recognising that other communities can offer complementary perspectives, support, and insights that further enrich the member experience.

What makes ClubCISO so different?

ClubCISO will place a renewed focus on peer insights. Long-standing members may recall the annual surveys that previously formed a valuable part of the community's

knowledge-sharing approach. Moving forward, ClubCISO will re-invigorate this initiative through events and insight-led activity designed to generate meaningful, peer-driven intelligence.

The objective is to equip CISOs and security leaders with practical insights they can take back to their organisations and apply internally. Topics may include how security priorities align across the community, how risk profiles compare between organisations, and where shared knowledge and experience can help address common challenges.

By fostering informed discussion and structured peer insight, ClubCISO aims to support security leaders in making more confident, evidence-based decisions while strengthening the collective value of the community.

Does that mean that we are not putting anything else into the strategy?

This does not mean that other strategic initiatives are being set aside. The ClubCISO strategy will be formally revisited in 2027; however, over the next six months the primary focus will be on relaunching the community with a strong emphasis on peer insights.

Establishing this foundation and ensuring it is effective is a priority. Once it is in place and delivering value, ClubCISO will be well positioned to expand its focus into additional areas. Historically, these have included initiatives such as promoting diversity within cyber security, supporting qualifications and professional development, coaching and mentoring, engagement with universities, and increased collaboration with the media.

All of these initiatives remain viable longer-term opportunities. For the immediate term, however, concentrating on a single strategic priority will enable the community to regain momentum and deliver meaningful impact for its members.

Does our stance on commercial vendors change?

No, we still want to ensure that the membership remains cyber security leaders/CISOs and any individuals that work for third parties will not be allowed to join ClubCISO. This will include vendors and consultancies.

We will be going through an exercise to refresh the data that we have on our ClubCISO members to ensure that the membership reflects the ethos of ClubCISO.

How will ClubCISO be funded in the future?

At this stage, the approach has not been finalised. Telstra will support the transition to Cyberhash, working in close collaboration with Cyberhash and the Advisory Board to explore sustainable options that enable ClubCISO to cover its operational costs.

There are several potential models that could be considered; however, member engagement and consultation will be a critical part of the process. No changes will be made without clear communication and an opportunity for members to provide input, ensuring that any future approach aligns with the needs and expectations of the community.

What happens if issues arise during the transition?

The transition has been designed specifically to reduce risk.

Safeguards include:

- Active support from both Telstra and Cyberhash
- Board oversight
- A phased, deliberate approach

Feedback from the community is welcomed and encouraged throughout to either Telstra or Cyberhash.

Where can I ask questions or share feedback?

You're encouraged to:

- Ask questions via the **ClubCISO community app**
- Review updates and FAQs on the **ClubCISO website**
- Engage through official community channels

Open dialogue is a key part of what makes ClubCISO strong.

Final note

This transition is about **protecting the future of ClubCISO**, not changing its identity.

Thank you for being part of the community and for the trust you place in it.

— **The ClubCISO Team**