

PCI PAL Data Protection Consultancy and DPO Case Study

Royston D Ballard

Chief Information Security Officer



Company Bio

- Founded in 1999
- Based in Ipswich, Suffolk and offices in USA, Canada and Australia
- Global provider of secure payment solutions

PCI Pal provides secure payment solutions within the financial services and technology sectors. The company has a cloud-based platform that allows organisations to process payments securely and comply with PCI DSS standards. PCI Pal's services serve various industries including business process outsourcing, government, retail, and utilities, allowing for transactions across digital, phone, and Interactive Voice Response (IVR) self-service channels.

The Challenge

"We were undergoing a team restructuring exercise, whilst running live PCI DSS and SOC 2 Type 1 audits, this left our GRC resourcing stretched very thin. Maintaining efficient management and maintenance of a Data Protection program, was an area that we couldn't provide the dedicated, specialist attention it needed with the current in-house capacity. Data Protection audit lifecycle management under our previous approach was also becoming structurally inefficient as the business grew."

"It wasn't just an internal resourcing headache; it put real pressure on our certification timelines and carried genuine regulatory risk during the transition. We needed the Data Protection function to be stabilised quickly, without taking our Information Security team's focus off the wider program that we were trying to build."

Why Us

"We required a collaborative partner who could act as a genuine extension of our team, and not an external, bolted on generic privacy consultancy. Given the environment that PCI Pal operates in as a Level 1 PCI DSS Service Provider, providing secure payment solutions, that operates in multiple international jurisdictions, we critically required data protection expertise that understood our sector, not just the regulation in the abstract."

"Realistically, our expectation was to close the gap fast, faster than a recruitment cycle would allow, and to bring some immediate attention to the areas that were most exposed, particularly pertaining to the areas of governance, operational maturity and resolving outstanding audit remediation requirements."

The Process

"Collaborative from day one. Ravi embedded himself into our existing team structure rather than expecting us to work around him, which made handing over the Data Protection function far smoother than I'd anticipated given everything else that was in motion at the time."

"Reconciling an in-flight company-wide audit with a functional restructuring exercise that were running simultaneously was never going to be entirely smooth. What made the difference was that Ravi treated it as a shared exercise and problem rather than something to simply hand back to us. Ravi helped us get the remediation plan drafted and moving rather than just flagging the gaps."

The Results

"PCI Pal's Data Protection program is now a stable, properly managed and maintained function rather than a risk sitting on our risk register. The work that has been fulfilled has freed up our Information Security team to focus on the wider programmatic improvements and maturity that we've been driving, instead of splitting attention across both domains."

"Ravi provides our team, and by extension PCI Pal and our clients, confidence that data protection is being handled by a full-time specialist and not being treated as a bolt-on to an already busy function. For a PCI DSS Level 1 provider, that's not a nice-to-have, it's part of how we demonstrate that we take all forms of regulatory compliance seriously."

"Without hesitation. Ravi provides exactly the kind of specialist knowledge and support that lets an in-house team stay focused on what they can and need to do, whilst having the confidence that Data Protection requirements are being handled efficiently and competently "