Cyber Security Policy and Research Institute

THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

The Weekly Newsletter of The George Washington University Cyber Security Policy and Research Institute

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Five (5) Cyber security events are scheduled in the Greater Washington Area in the next few weeks.

CSPRI Associate Director Costis Toreas discusses data breaches with the National Journal

CSPRI's Associate Director Costis Toregas spoke to the National Journal about large-scale data breaches, like that of OPM - and the shortcomings of the solutions being considered in order to remediate the harm.

To read the article, click **here**.

Cyber Security Policy News

Government cybersecurity failures
-The cybersecurity news cycle was again dominated by stories, investigations and reports about the extent of cybersecurity failures at major government agencies of late. After a series of stinging government hacks, the Department of Homeland Security said scans of incoming Internet traffic from the public would be amped up, according to NextGov. "It has been unclear how this monitoring might affect the privacy of citizens and employees," writes Aliya Sternstein. "Now, a little-noticed National Archives and Records Administration assessment offers some insight: Any surveillance data collected that does not trigger alarms will be erased pronto, according to a pending records disposal plan."

Events

July 21
ISSA DC Meetup

July 22
ISSA Baltimore Meetup

July 24
Data Across Borders

July 30
Cyber Montgomery

CharmSec Meetup

Click here for detailed descriptions

Much of the impetus for this latest round of cybersecurity amping up comes in response to the breach at the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), which disclosed earlier this month that hackers made off with nearly 20 million background check forms housed at the agency. Now, many lawmakers are saying the OPM shouldn't be trusted with this sensitive data. "Reps. Ted Lieu (D-Calif.) and Steve Russell (R-Okla.), who both likely had their security clearance details taken in the breach, are prepping a bill that would move the security clearance database away from the OPM, perhaps back to the Defense Department (DOD), where it was housed until 2004,"reports Cory Bennett with The Hill.

Department of the Interior - In trouble
The machinations come amid the release of a cybersecurity audit report at the Department of Interior, which housed the OPM data during the breach. The DOI's inspector general report found nearly 3,000 critical and high-risk vulnerabilities identified in the DOI's various bureaus that could allow a remote attacker to take control of publicly accessible computers or render them unavailable. See SC Magazine for more on the report.

The reports of security failures at DOI weren't limited to inspector general audits last week. According to the National Journal, an investigation revealed that a key technology officer at DOI claimed a fake educational diploma before he was hired away to the Census Bureau. The man, Faisal Ahmed, was the assistant director of the technology division of the Office of Law Enforcement and Security between 2007 and 2013. After he left his job at the Department of the Interior, Ahmed was hired by the Census Bureau, where he is currently employed," Kaveh Waddell wrote. "The report, which has not been made public, was unexpectedly revealed at aWednesday committee hearing, during a rocky few months for the government's information technology services. The director of the Office of Personnel Management stepped down last week after her agency revealed that a total of more than 22 million individuals were affected by a pair of data breaches, and other departments and agencies have come under scrutiny for their IT practices."

About this Newsletter

This newsletter is a weekly summary of events related to cyber security policy and research, with a special focus on developments and events in the Washington, DC area. It is published by the Cyber Security Policy and Research Institute (CSPRI) of the George Washington University. CSPRI is a center for GW and the Washington area that promotes technical research and policy analysis of topics in or related to cybersecurity. More information is available at our website, http://www.cspri.seas.gwu.edu

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