

Office of Research Security Newsletter

August 2019

NEW AGENCY NAME, ACTING DIRECTOR

June 24, 2019

Consistent with Executive Order 13869, “Transferring Responsibility for Background Investigations to the Department of Defense,” the Acting Secretary of Defense has renamed the Defense Security Service to be the Defense Counterintelligence and Security Agency (DCSA). This action became effective June 20, 2019.

Charles Phalen, Jr. will serve as the Acting Director of the DCSA effective July 1, 2019. Mr. Phalen will remain the Director of the National Background Investigations Bureau. Mr. Phalen’s dual-appointment will be in effect until a permanent DCSA Director is named.

DCSA will serve as the primary Federal entity for conducting background investigations for the Federal Government. The DCSA will also, as a continuation of the former DSS, serve as the primary Department of Defense component for the National Industrial Security Program and will execute responsibilities relating to continuous vetting, insider threat programs, and any other responsibilities assigned to it by the Secretary of Defense.



THE UNIVERSITY OF
ALABAMA IN HUNTSVILLE

REFRESHER SECURITY TRAININGS FOR 2019:

Thursday, Apr 25, BJA, RSA –
11:00 am to 12:30 pm

Tuesday, Jun 4, BJA, RSA –
11:30 am to 1:00 pm

Wednesday, Jun 19, OKT S105
– 11:00 am to 12:30 pm

Wednesday, Jul 17, OKT S105
– 11:00 am to 12:30 pm

Friday, Aug 2, OKT S 105
– 11:00 am to 12:30 pm

Thursday, Aug 29, BJA, RSA –
11:30 am to 1:00 pm

Thursday, Oct 24, BJA, RSA –
11:30 am to 1:00 pm

November – “Movie Month” –
Details to follow...

Warning As Iranian State Hackers Target LinkedIn Users With Dangerous New Malware

Forbes, July 22, 2019, By Zak Doffman

The multidimensional cyber warfare playing out in the Middle East has taken a shape we have not seen at this scale before—a mix of military offensive and defensive capabilities with state-sponsored attacks on civilian targets. With cyber warfare becoming “an interchangeable battlefield tool,” an attack in one domain can lead to retaliation in another. And the catalyst has been the continuing escalation of tensions between the U.S. (and its allies) and Iran.

Iran understands the retaliation against the U.S. military in the cyber domain “might be akin to throwing rocks at a tank,” but it can hit the vast and under-protected U.S. corporate sector at will. Two weeks after U.S. Cyber Command hit Iran’s command and control structure in the aftermath of the downing of a U.S. surveillance drone, came a warning that an Iranian-led hack was targeting the millions of unpatched Microsoft Outlook Systems.

To read the full article –

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/zakdoeffman/2019/07/22/critical-linkedin-warning-as-irans-hackers-send-fake-invites-laced-with-malware/#19aec3246ac1>

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Universities Under Pressure as Lawmakers Push Research Security

American Institute of Physics, July 12, 2019, By Mitch Ambrose



Mounting efforts by U.S. lawmakers and agencies to prevent federally funded research from being exploited by foreign governments have elicited increasing pushback from university leaders.

Lawmakers have been developing proposals throughout this year to respond to the allegedly systematic misappropriation of U.S. research and technology by the Chinese government and other rival nations. Backers of some of these proposals are currently vying to include them in the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), major defense policy legislation that Congress by tradition passes annually.

One proposal that has broad support from higher education associations and scientific societies would establish mechanisms to facilitate dialogue between security agencies and the scientific community. Other proposals would require the government to compile lists of foreign research institutions that it believes pose an espionage risk. Still other, more aggressive measures have been floated in Congress but are not presently close to becoming law, such as increasing the vetting of research grantees.

University leaders have warned that such vetting measures could stifle international collaboration and weaken the U.S. research enterprise. Some have also expressed skepticism about the severity of the threats identified by the government and have warned that concerns are proliferating about discrimination against Chinese and Chinese American researchers.

To read the full article - https://www.aip.org/fyi/2019/universities-under-pressure-lawmakers-push-research-security?utm_medium=email&utm_source=FYI&dm_i=1ZJN,6DQOK,E29ELN,P97XR,1

