The Security Scoop

Information Security and Privacy Awareness Week

CISO Corner

I am pleased to announce that the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is celebrating the 16th annual Information Security and Privacy Awareness Week (ISPAW) April 12-16. The theme for ISPAW 2021 is "Better Together." Throughout the week we want to raise awareness of important information security and privacy topics. This year during ISPAW, we'll highlight the role we all play in protecting VA and Veteran sensitive information and share best practices to help you successfully safeguard sensitive data.

Paul Cunningham, CISO

At VA, information security is everyone's responsibility! Our ability to successfully protect VA and Veteran sensitive data is strengthened when we all come together with the unified goal of putting information security and privacy first. With a "Better Together" focus, we'll celebrate ISPAW with a week of engaging virtual content, activities, and educational materials.

As part of this year's ISPAW celebration, VA will observe April 13th as the first-ever Identity Management Day. This year the National Cyber Security Alliance (NCSA) established April 13, 2021, as Identity Management Day, to emphasize the importance of good identity management practices and cyber hygiene. Additionally, it will serve as an opportunity to promote the importance of identity management and critical components including, governance, identity-centric security best practices, processes, and technology.

We're looking forward to a successful 2021 ISPAW. Please join in the celebration, have a little fun, and help spread the word by promoting ISPAW resources within your network. Through everyone's full participation and support, we can continue to foster the proactive and vigilant safeguarding of our collective data.

Our Success is VA's Success!

Cybersecurity and privacy MUST be everyone's business.

Why ISPAW?

Long gone are the days when information security and privacy were solely the tasks of technical specialists. Today's threats are so sophisticated that cybersecurity and privacy MUST be everyone's business. It is the shared responsibility of all VA employees to protect and secure the personal information of the 26 million Veterans we serve. Through a combined and conscientious effort, we will fulfill that mission and minimize risk to VA data. ISPAW is an opportunity to refresh our knowledge base while shining a light on VA's ongoing information security and privacy efforts.
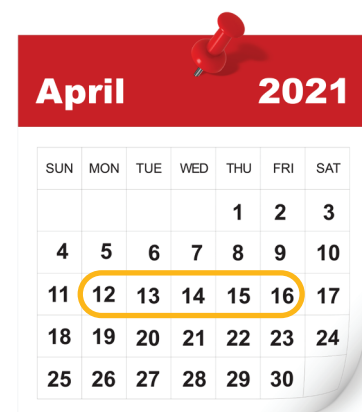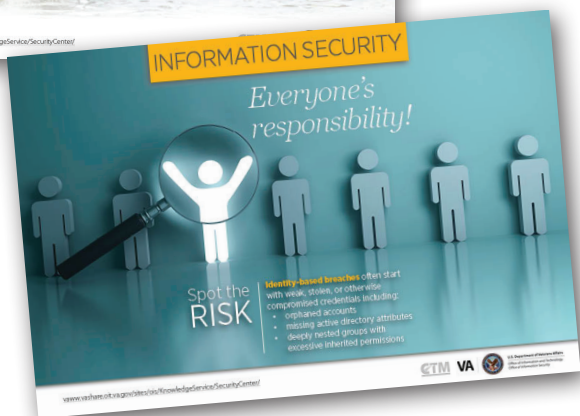
The Cybersecurity Awareness and Training Sub-Committee and VA Privacy Service have developed materials to help you promote and celebrate ISPAW. Throughout the week, you'll receive information and tips regarding steps you can take to protect both your private information and that of our Nation's Veterans.

How Can You Get Involved?

Starting on April 12th you'll be able to visit the Cybersecurity Awareness Portal (CAP) to sign the "Better-Together" pledge. So, save the date and be sure to check out the CAP along with Privacy Hub, to access virtual event information, download games and activities, read engaging blogs, review specialized ISSO and PO packets, and so much more. The CAP is where you can learn about what's taking place for ISPAW and Identity Management Day and a great resource to help you stay committed to information security and privacy all year long!

April 2021

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
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4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

ISPAW 2021 Better Together

We win the race to protect VA and Veteran sensitive information by leveraging the energies of best practices and teamwork.

www.vashare.oit.va.gov/sites/ois/KnowledgeService/SecurityCenter/

Help educate others in your facility by sharing posters from the Security Center, and ensure you don't miss upcoming issues of The Security Scoop *by subscribing.*

INFORMATION SECURITY

Everyone's responsibility!

Spot the RISK

Identity-based breaches often start with weak, stolen, or otherwise compromised credentials including:
- orphaned accounts
- missing active directory attributes
- deeply nested groups with excessive inherited permissions

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Inaugural Identity Management Day

Over the past year, our reliance on digital solutions grew significantly as we adjusted to the effects of the COVID-19 Pandemic. The increased reliance on these solutions brought a rise in identity-based breaches. Digital transformation has rapidly become a top priority for many organizations as they look to reduce risk and support these changes to the way we work and live each day. With that in mind, it is timelier than ever to kick-off the inaugural observance of Identity Management Day.

Founded by the National Cyber Security Alliance (NCSA) and Identity Defined Security Alliance (IDSA), this awareness event will take place the second Tuesday in April each year to help organizations and individuals reduce the risk of a breach through identity and security strategies. Audiences will learn about key components of identity management that will enable them to prioritize identity security and ultimately ensure fewer data breaches moving forward.

Want to learn more about Identity and Access Management (IAM) policies, directives, and VA-specific efforts? Then visit the CTM IAM Security Center site. The Security Center has an abundance of resources for Information System Security Officers (ISSOs), Privacy Officers (POs), Project Managers, and other VA cyber professionals.

Read previous issues of *The* Security Scoop

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