



Protecting Critical Infrastructure from Misinformation & Disinformation Subcommittee Meeting June 14, 2022

Purpose of Meeting

- The purpose of the CISA Cybersecurity Advisory Committee (CSAC) Protecting Critical Infrastructure from Misinformation & Disinformation (MDM) Subcommittee meeting was to discuss developments from recent conversations with Maricopa County, Arizona elections officials and review strategy for the CSAC June Quarterly Meeting.

Discussion

- Ms. Kirsten Heidelberg, Alternate Designated Federal Officer (ADFO) for the MDM Subcommittee, brought the meeting to order and turned the call over to Dr. Starbird.
- Dr. Kate Starbird, Associate Professor, Human Centered Design & Engineering, University of Washington, MDM Subcommittee Chair, thanked the members for joining. She noted this time is dedicated to discussing the final recommendations to present for vote at the CSAC June Quarterly Meeting and share ideas of next steps for the Subcommittee.
- Dr. Starbird shared takeaways from her conversation with Mr. Stephen Richer, County Recorder for Maricopa County, Arizona and past briefer. She obtained permission from Mr. Richer to use his quote “managing mis-, dis-, and mal-information is my day job. Running elections is my night job” in the subcommittee’s recommendations for the CSAC June Quarterly Meeting. Subcommittee members affirmed Dr. Starbird’s suggestion of adding the quote in the recommendations and stated that it was important to motivate the recommendations. Ms. Alicia Tate-Nadeau, Illinois Emergency Management Agency, commented that the quote speaks to the heart of the recommendations. Dr. Starbird took for action to incorporate the quote into the draft recommendations and return the updated draft to Ms. Heidelberg by Wednesday, June 15.
- Dr. Starbird reviewed her conversation with Mr. Jameel Jaffer, Columbia Law Professor, to socialize the existence of the subcommittee and their taskings.
 - Dr. Starbird shared that Mr. Jaffer intends to reach out to civil liberties groups to help socialize the existence of the subcommittee following the CSAC June Quarterly Meeting. He recommended that the group contact [Ms. Faiza Patel](#) and [Ms. Rachel Levinson-Waldman](#) of the Brennan Center. He provided recommendations to Dr. Starbird on how the group could best speak to their tasking questions related to surveillance and monitoring. Mr. Jaffer recommended that the group contact the two individuals during their July meeting as they discuss issues of surveillance and monitoring. Ms. Vijaya Gadde, Legal, Public Policy, and Trust and Safety Lead, Twitter, affirmed this course of action.
 - Dr. Starbird solicited additional recommendations for future briefers. Ms. Gadde recommended that the group hear from the [Electronic Frontier Foundation](#).



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- Dr. Starbird added that Mr. Richer's colleague, Mr. Scott Jarred, suggested that the subcommittee explore the idea of how CISA could develop a rapid response team to deploy virtually or in-person to local election officials' jurisdictions struggling with specific informational threats. The support would include checking equipment to verify if a breach is present or not, determining how to communicate the existence of a breach, and determining how to target certain kinds of communication.
 - Ms. Tate-Nadeau clarified if this rapid response team would only act in the context of MDM threats. Dr. Starbird noted that the response team would require a broader range of expertise, as they first must be able to verify whether a real threat exists, then be able to communicate the existence of an MDM threat.
 - Mr. Geoff Hale, CISA, commented that this is a fascinating idea that takes CISA's existing operational responsibilities to consider MDM as part of its core mission set. He noted that this would be an evolution of CISA's current defensive posture. Ms. Gadde agreed with this framing of the question.
 - Dr. Starbird commented that the rapid response team would need to surge for short periods of time around elections. She suggested the subcommittee consider the requirements for the team's expandability, ability to conduct media analysis, and the level of understanding on MDM in a communications context.
 - Mr. Hale noted the possibility to stand up this team in the short term by encouraging the communications team to consider MDM equities. Dr. Starbird took for action to discuss how CISA could stand up a rapid response team during the CSAC June Quarterly Meeting.
 - Ms. Kim Wyman, Senior Elections Official, CISA, stressed that election officials across the country are struggling most with MDM threats and physical security. She encouraged the subcommittee to lean into their work and their recommendations and noted that the group was selected by the Director for a reason.
 - Ms. Gadde noted that physical and MDM-related threats are often interrelated, so the group cannot address the physical threats against elections officials without addressing the root cause of MDM-related threats. She continued by stressing that MDM threat exist with or without a cyber component. She noted that the idea of a rapid response team must include the ability to engage whether or not a cyber component is present.
 - Dr. Starbird agreed with Ms. Gadde's point that threats to critical infrastructure are not limited to cyber threats.
- Subcommittee members did not express further items to raise during the CSAC June Quarterly Meeting. Ms. Gadde noted that she and Ms. Suzanne Spaulding, Senior Advisor for Homeland Security and Director of the Defending Democratic Institutions Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), will be dialing in virtually for both the closed and open sessions.
- Mr. Hale updated the subcommittee that CISA is working to determine best practices for socializing the existence of the subcommittee and the proposed recommendations with Congress. Dr. Starbird reflected on a recent conversation with CSAC Chair, Mr. Tom Fanning, and noted that she intends to determine a strategy with other CSAC Members during the closed session.
- Subcommittee members took for action to notify the CSAC Team whether they prefer to meet on Wednesday, July 20 or Tuesday, July 26 from 11:00a.m. to 12:00 p.m. ET. Ms. Gadde noted that she will be on vacation during both times but encouraged the subcommittee to meet.



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- Ms. Spaulding joined the meeting and updated the subcommittee on her recent conversation with Mr. Jamil Jaffer, George Mason Law Professor, where she described the subcommittee's tasking and the purpose of the draft recommendations for CISA to point individuals to resources on election topics.
 - Ms. Spaulding shared that Mr. Jaffer encouraged the subcommittee to discuss their work in the context not that CISA is dealing with disinformation by deciding what is true and pointing people to resources, but that CISA has a mission to ensure National Critical Functions are secure and resilient, and disinformation poses a threat to CISA's ability to do its mission. Therefore, CISA needs to work with a range of actors on developing best practices for countering MDM threats.
- Dr. Starbird thanked the subcommittee members and adjourned the meeting.

Action Items

- Dr. Starbird will updated the draft MDM recommendations to include the quote from Mr. Richer and send the updated draft to Ms. Heidelberg by Wednesday, June 15.
- MDM Subcommittee members will identify the next meeting date for late July 2022.
- Mr. Hale will continue to determine the next steps for outreach to Congress on the Subcommittee's work.



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Attendees*

Participants

Name	Organization
Dr. Kate Starbird, Chair	University of Washington
Ms. Vijaya Gadde	Twitter
Mr. Geoff Hale	CISA
Ms. Suzanne Spaulding	CSIS
Ms. Alicia Tate-Nadeau	Illinois Emergency Management Agency (IEMA)
Ms. Kim Wyman	CISA

Other Meeting Attendees

Name	Organization
Ms. Devi Nair	CSIS
Ms. Claire Teitelman	JP Morgan Chase

Government and Contractor Support

Name	Organization
Ms. Kirsten Heidelberg, ADFO	CISA
Ms. Mariefred Evans	TekSynap

**Meeting was held via Teams/teleconference*