



ACADEMIC SECURITY AND COUNTER EXPLOITATION PROGRAM

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THE OPEN SOURCE MEDIA SUMMARY

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BIDEN SIGNS NEW CYBERSECURITY GUIDELINES AFTER CISA ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Vuk Mujovic | TechGenix | September 16, 2022

The White House, on Wednesday, released new cybersecurity guidelines to provide details on the executive order signed by President Biden in May of last year. The guidelines are based on the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency's (CISA) recommendations and findings. The White House's statement mentions these guidelines will help ensure protection and enhance security of the software supply chain to government agencies and entities. The statement from the White House points out three important developments moving forward: The National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) will be responsible for software accreditation, private vendors selling software to state and federal entities and agencies must have accreditation, and agencies must ensure inventorying of all software in 90 days. Further, accreditation for critical and non-critical software must be furnished within 270 and 365 days, respectively. However, the perception of the big, slow bureaucracy is making it harder to believe that public agencies and companies will be able to adopt these cybersecurity regulations and best practices in three months.

Read the full article [here](#).

CHINA TO PROVIDE CONVENIENT CONDITIONS FOR FOREIGN TALENT: CHINESE PREMIER

XinhuaNet | People's Daily Online | October 1, 2022

China will provide convenient conditions and quality services for foreign talent to work in China and give more support to their research environment and innovation platform, Chinese Premier Li Keqiang said Friday. Li made the remarks at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing when meeting with foreign experts who had received the Friendship Award in 2022, given annually by the Chinese government to honor outstanding foreign experts in China. He spoke highly of the contributions made by foreign experts in China's reform, opening-up, and exchanges between China and foreign countries. Li noted China is still the largest developing country globally, and its modernization remains a long and arduous task. He said no matter how the international situation may change, China will focus on running its affairs well and ensuring a good life for the Chinese people. This year, due to the impact of unexpected factors, the Chinese economy did face some new downward pressure, but on the whole, it has shown a steady recovery, Li said. "We have the confidence and capability to keep the economy operating within a reasonable range and promote sustained and sound economic development," he added.

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THE CONGRESSIONAL RESEARCH SERVICE (CRS) PUBLISHES PRIMER ON THE BIOECONOMY

Lynn L. Bergeson and Carla N. Hutton of Bergeson & Campbell, P.C. | The National Law Review | September 27, 2022

The Congressional Research Service (CRS) published a CRS report, updated on September 19, 2022, entitled *The Bioeconomy: A Primer*. The report provides an overview of the bioeconomy, details the efforts of the United States and other selected nations pertaining to the bioeconomy, and offers policy considerations for strengthening the role of the United States in the global bioeconomy. The report does not examine the policies and programs of individual sectors that contribute to the bioeconomy (e.g., biofuels, biomanufacturing, pharmaceuticals, or agriculture), but instead discusses the bioeconomy from a macro level perspective. According to the report, issues for consideration regarding advancement of the U.S. bioeconomy that could be pursued by Congress include: Development and Implementation of a National Strategy; The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (NASEM) and others have recommended that the federal government develop and regularly update a national bioeconomy strategy.

Read the full article [here](#).

RESPONDING TO THE CHINA CHALLENGE: BLUEPRINT 2.0

Dean Cheng and James Carafano | The Heritage Foundation | September 29, 2022

The Heritage Foundation's first China Blueprint identified China as the most persistent and consequential foreign policy challenge that will confront the U.S. for the next several decades. Nothing has happened during the past two years to change that judgment. Cold War analogies to the current confrontation with China may be imperfect, but when Ronald Reagan summarized his strategy for the Soviet Union as "We win and they lose," he captured something enduring about the way Americans approach competition. What the U.S. needs today is a game plan not for "managing competition" with China, but for winning. The Communist regime in China—its global ambition, growing power, and values that are diametrically opposed to America's own—is the greatest international danger facing the United States. Not just in its own right: It compounds other threats to the U.S. like those posed by Russia and Iran. The U.S. must have robust, practical solutions that vouchsafe Americans against the threats posed by China in every sphere, from security at home and national interest abroad to the values that infuse America's role in the world. These responses must be comprehensive and encompass both foreign and domestic policies and every level of government.

Read the full article [here](#).

CORPORATE PERSPECTIVE: U.S. HIGHER EDUCATION RESEARCH AND INNOVATION UNIVERSITIES

Jake Stine | EDUCAUSE Review | September 26, 2022

In response to poor farming practices leading to food shortages and insect plagues in the nineteenth century, Abraham Lincoln signed the Morrill Land-Grant Acts into law in 1862. The act effectively created the research and innovation campus concept to solve societal issues and ushered in the philosophies of German educational reformer Wilhelm von Humboldt. Seen as a radical in his time, Humboldt theorized that research labs coupled with lecture halls at higher education institutions would foster ideation and innovation practices that would ultimately benefit society. Was the 1862 act a success? Absolutely! After a U.S. farming and agriculture industry turnaround, the U.S. research and innovation campus era began. There are 112 land-grant research and innovation campuses in the United States today.¹

Read the full article [here](#).



INSIDER THREAT TASK FORCE PIVOTING FOCUS TO ‘SAFEGUARDING SCIENCE’

Justin Doubleday | Federal News Network | September 27, 2022

The National Insider Threat Task Force is raising awareness about phishing, social engineering and other modern tactics used to target federal employees and contractors, while also gearing up for a new push aimed at “safeguarding science,” according to its deputy director. The theme of year’s “insider threat awareness month,” held every September, has been “critical thinking in digital spaces.” The task force and its partners have been highlighting online risks including social engineering efforts, mis-, dis-, and mal-information, and cyber tactics like phishing emails. Rebecca Morgan, assistant director for enterprise threat mitigation at the National Counterintelligence and Security Center and deputy director of the task force, says this year’s campaign is motivated by the shift to remote work along with increasingly sophisticated online campaigns aimed at compromising the national security workforce.

Read the full article [here](#).

RESEARCHERS UNCOVER COVERT ATTACK CAMPAIGN TARGETING MILITARY CONTRACTORS

Ravie Lakshmanan | The Hacker News | September 29, 2022

A new covert attack campaign singled out multiple military and weapons contractor companies with spear-phishing emails to trigger a multi-stage infection process designed to deploy an unknown payload on compromised machines. The highly-targeted intrusions, dubbed STEEP#MAVERICK by Securonix, also targeted a strategic supplier to the F-35 Lightning II fighter aircraft. "The attack was carried out starting in late summer 2022 targeting at least two high-profile military contractor companies," Den Iuzvyk, Tim Peck, and Oleg Kolesnikov said in an analysis. Infection chains begin with a phishing mail with a ZIP archive attachment containing a shortcut file that claims to be a PDF document about "Company & Benefits," which is then used to retrieve a stager -- an initial binary that's used to download the desired malware -- from a remote server. This PowerShell stager sets the stage for a "robust chain of stagers" that progresses through seven more steps, when the final PowerShell script executes a remote payload "header.png" hosted on a server named "terma[.]app."

Read the full article [here](#).

CORPORATES, ACADEMIC PARTNERSHIPS WEIGH GROWING CROSS-STRAIT RISK

Nan Nielsen | Hong Kong Economic Journal | October 4, 2022

Companies as well as academic institutions are operating amid growing geopolitical tensions in the South China Sea heightened by US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi’s visit to Taiwan last month. Calling the move a ‘major political provocation’, Beijing has reacted by launching a series of military drills around Taiwan, banning imports from hundreds of Taiwanese food producers and placing two Taiwanese charities and several companies on a ‘secessionists’ blacklist. Tony Danker, the Director-General of the Confederation of British Industry (CBI) indicated recently that thousands of British companies were switching business links from China to other countries in anticipation of a further deterioration in relations between China and the West. In the financial sector, China’s largest insurer, Ping An Group, is doubling down on its call to break up HSBC, where Ping An is the largest shareholder. Ping An claims that a spin-off of HSBC’s Asia business would create significant additional market value whereas some observers believe that the attempt is essentially about creating a China-friendly bank that helps China reduce the risks of being vulnerable to potential future financial sanctions.

Read the full article [here](#).



FORMER CHICAGO GRADUATE STUDENT JI CHAOQUN CONVICTED OF SPYING FOR CHINA PART OF LARGER PLAN: ANALYSTS

Mark Magner | *South China Morning Post* | September 27, 2022

A former Chicago graduate student and member of the US Army Reserve convicted of acting as an illegal agent for China appears to be part of a “fish-at-the-bottom-of-the-ocean” operation in which seemingly ordinary recruits are nudged into positions of usefulness by Beijing’s state security apparatus, analysts said. Ji Chaoqun, 31, worked on behalf of a “high-level intelligence officer” in the Jiangsu Province Ministry of State Security, identifying individuals for potential enlistment, according to evidence presented at his two-week trial. The US Department of Justice said targets for recruitment by Ji and the Jiangsu MSS included Chinese nationals working in the US as engineers and scientists, such as those at defence contractors. Ji was found guilty late Monday of both conspiring to and acting as an unauthorised agent for a foreign government and for making false claims to the US Army. He was acquitted on two other wire fraud charges. In a statement, Damon Cheronis, Ji’s lead lawyer, said they were “pleased” the jury returned the two not-guilty verdicts. According to prosecutors, Ji was targeted by Jiangsu MSS agents in China soon before travelling to Chicago in 2013 to study electrical engineering at the Illinois Institute of Technology.

Read the full article [here](#).

RESEARCHERS TRAINED IN U.S., AFTER RETURNING TO CHINA, ARE DRIVING MILITARY BREAKTHROUGHS FOR BEIJING

C.M. Vik | *The New York Sun* | September 28, 2022

Some 162 researchers conducting sensitive military research for the U.S. at Los Alamos have returned to China, where they have contributed to major breakthroughs in the PLA’s military modernization, a new report discloses. The report, issued last week by a data software company called Strider Technologies, shows that the breakthroughs include scientific advancements in “hypersonics, deep-earth penetrating warheads, unmanned autonomous vehicles, jet engines, and submarine noise reduction.” These advancements have important military value and in some instances, such as hypersonics, contributed to China developing more advanced weaponry than America. Strider Technologies, according to a news site called Venture Beat, which covers the tech world, is “designed to help companies, governments and research institutions protect intellectual property (IP), talent and supply chains from nation-state threats.”

Read the full article [here](#).

NUMEROUS ORGS HACKED AFTER INSTALLING WEAPONIZED OPEN SOURCE APPS

Dan Goodin | *Ars Technica* | September 29, 2022

Hackers backed by the North Korean government are weaponizing well-known pieces of open source software in an ongoing campaign that has already succeeded in compromising “numerous” organizations in the media, defense and aerospace, and IT services industries, Microsoft said on Thursday. ZINC—Microsoft’s name for a threat actor group also called Lazarus, which is best known for conducting the devastating 2014 compromise of Sony Pictures Entertainment—has been lacing PuTTY and other legitimate open source applications with highly encrypted code that ultimately installs espionage malware. The hackers then pose as job recruiters and connect with individuals of targeted organizations over LinkedIn. After developing a level of trust over a series of conversations and eventually moving them to the WhatsApp messenger, the hackers instruct the individuals to install the apps, which infect the employees’ work environments.

Read the full article [here](#).

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U.S., CHINA'S COLD WAR IS RAGING IN CYBERSPACE, WHERE INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY IS A COSTLY FRONT

Naveed Jamali and Tom O'Connor | Newsweek | September 16, 2022

The competition between the world's preeminent powers, the United States and China, is playing out on an unprecedented scale, involving what U.S. officials say is a grand theft that both the government and the private sector are struggling to combat. Despite Chinese officials vehemently denying the mass systematic stealing of intellectual property, the most senior U.S. counterintelligence official said the ongoing heist sets the country back some half a trillion dollars a year as Washington and Beijing compete for technical and military supremacy in the 21st century. "The theft of intellectual property by the People's Republic of China costs America as much as \$500 billion a year," William Evanina, Director of the National Counterintelligence and Security Center, told Newsweek. "That's like taking \$4,000 to \$6,000 annually from every family of four in America." This stark assessment comes as relations between Washington and Beijing continue to deteriorate ahead of the 2020 U.S. presidential election.

Read the full article [here](#).

PENTAGON'S CHINA WARNING PROMPTS CALLS TO VET U.S. FUNDING OF STARTUPS

Kate O'Keefe | The Wall Street Journal | May 8, 2022

Congress may soon require government agencies to vet tech startups seeking federal funding, after a Defense Department study found China is exploiting a popular program that funds innovation among small American companies. The study, which was viewed by The Wall Street Journal, found China is using state-sponsored methods to target companies that have received Pentagon funding from the Small Business Innovation Research program. The SBIR program for decades has sought to promote innovation through a competitive U.S. government award process.

Read the full article [here](#).

CHINA USED 'DOUBLE-CROSSING COMPANIES' TO STEAL U.S. NATIONAL SECURITY RESEARCH

Stephen Dinan | The Washington Times | September 28, 2022

Although the federal government invests heavily in research, it's China that gets more out of it, according to a Defense Department study of its spending that is getting attention on Capitol Hill. Sen. Joni Ernst, Iowa Republican, touted the findings of the study Wednesday. She said the Pentagon's conclusions should be worrying not just to the defense world but also to every government agency that spends on research that might be of interest to China. "China, not the U.S., is the ultimate beneficiary of DoD and other [U.S. government] research investments," the Pentagon's review concluded, according to Ms. Ernst. The Pentagon's review is not public and Ms. Ernst's office said it could not share the document, but she described the trickery at work. She said it goes beyond the traditional boundaries of intellectual property theft.

Read the full article [here](#).

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