Final Minutes of the Security Advisory Council Meeting

Webex

February 22, 2023 from 9:04 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Central

Notice for this meeting was electronically posted to the MRO website here on January 26, 2023. A final agenda, including advanced reading materials, was also posted on February 16, 2023.

1. **Call to Order and Determination of Quorum**

   Security Advisory Council (SAC) Chair Ian Anderson called the meeting to order at 9:04 a.m. and facilitated a roll call to determine that a quorum of the SAC was present. A complete list of attendees is included as Exhibit A.

2. **Standards of Conduct and Antitrust Guidelines**

   Pursuant to Policy and Procedure 4, MRO Director of Security, Steen Fjalstad, highlighted MRO's Standards of Conduct, Conflict of Interest, and Antitrust Guidelines.

3. **MRO Council Governance and Advisory Council Logistics**

   Fjalstad reviewed the welcome presentation for new members and provided an overview of the MRO organizational structure. Fjalstad highlighted the third quarter council meetings scheduled for August 8-10, 2023 and encouraged SAC members to attend.

   Fjalstad proposed an activity on May 23, in advance of the SAC meeting scheduled for May 24, 2023.

   Action Item: MRO staff to follow up with Fjalstad regarding site visit arrangements.

4. **MRO Regional Risk Assessment (RRA)**

   MRO Principal Technical Advisor, Mark Tiemeier, provided an overview of the security risks identified in the 2023 Regional Risk Assessment (RRA). Tiemeier highlighted:

   - risks associated with increasingly dispersed generation sites
   - changes in usage and increased demand
   - insider threats including malicious insiders
   - potential supply chain compromise; risks related to phishing, ransomware, and malware
   - compromise of sensitive information that could be used to plan attacks;
   - impact of increased extreme weather events and the opportunities these present to attackers
   - increasing penetration of Internet connected devices
   - physical protections from incidents was noted as challenging due to dispersed assets
   - a tightening supply of expert labor with security and operational expertise
   - and vulnerabilities due to unpatched systems.

Tiemeier also noted that increased uncertainty increases challenges of planning and increases vulnerabilities.

Tiemeier noted opportunities in distributed energy resources, as these increase opportunities for bi-directional flows. A question was asked about whether the Council could help address the issue of a tightening labor supply through training or other ways to develop expertise.

Reliability risks will be presented during the March 1, 2023 Reliability Advisory Council (RAC) meeting.

5. **MRO SACTF Update**

Fjalstad provided an update and facilitated discussion regarding the Security Advisory Council Threat Forum (SACTF).

MRO SACTF Threat Call and Annual Statistics
Fjalstad provided an overview of registration, attendance, and other statistics. Discussion ensued.

MRO SACTF Work Plan
Fjalstad provided an overview of the SACTF work plan for 2023. Discussion ensued.

An area of focus for the SACTF will be the threat call; other work will be de-prioritized. The SACTF will have no formal quarterly meetings, and will submit a revised work plan to reflect this.

MRO SACTF Open Source Information Sharing Document
MRO Staff will provide increased assistance with developing Open Source document.

Future of the SACTF
Formal expectations will be limited to the threat call and Open Source document.

SAC Member Jason Nations asked whether any governance documents will need to be adjusted. Nations indicated that NERC is interested in determining how other regions can benefit from the threat call and stressed importance of integration and coordination between SAC and SACTF.

SAC Member Daniel Graham stated that he will forward a SACTF nominee within two weeks, encouraged others to submit nominees as well. Chair Anderson asked whether others would commit to provide nominees, and highlighted that serving on the SACTF is a potential growth opportunity for entity employees. SAC Member Patrick Glunz is also seeking a nominee. SAC Member Justin Haar will also seek a nominee. Nations encouraged seeking potential SACTF members among regular threat call attendees.

Action Item: Fjalstad will review the charter to determine whether the SACTF charter or guidelines need to be adjusted.

Action Item: Chair Anderson will follow up with SAC members regarding SACTF nominations.

SAC member Clayton Whitacre asked whether SACTF members could be reimbursed for attending SAC meetings if the SACTF is not holding quarterly meetings.

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Action Item: Fjalstad will follow up on possible reimbursement of SACTF members for attendance at SAC meetings.

6. **MRO Representatives on NERC Subgroups – Written Reports**

   Fjalstad led the discussion during the meeting.

   NERC Supply Chain Working Group (SCWG) – Tony Eddleman, NPPD and NERC SCWG Representative
   Discussion.

   Tony Eddleman, NERC SCWG Representative, provided an oral report during the meeting. Eddleman highlighted that the SCWG is seeking new members, including a new chair. FERC has requested that metrics be included as guidelines are revised and updated. 3 approved: Open Source software, secure equipment delivery, risk management life cycle. 2 are being prepared for March meeting: Provenance, and Vendor Risk Management Life Cycle. 3 for June: Vendor Identified Incident Response Process, Supply Chain Risk Related to Cloud Service Providers, Procurement Language. SCWG working on new paper/security guideline on Sourcing Issues with Supply Chain Procurements. Eddleman noted that updating this many security guidelines presents a challenge in terms of volunteers. Also a challenge to keep up with what federal government, industry is doing.

   Fjalstad asked about National Laboratories, meeting scheduled and whether they will be in attendance at March meeting, discussed SAC interest in building greater connections with National Labs. SCWG is trying to foster these relationships and National Labs' ability to evaluate equipment, improve security.

   NERC Security Integration and Technology Enablement Subcommittee (SITES) – Alan Kloster, Evergy and NERC SITES Representative
   Alan Kloster was not present, but submitted a written report. Fjalstad highlighted white papers in progress with SITES. The SITES group is focused on upcoming meeting in Clearwater at the end of March of all 3 working groups (March 23, 2023). Provide thoughts and questions to Kloster – Fjalstad or Chair Anderson can facilitate this as needed.

7. **Project Updates**

   Chair Anderson led the discussion during the meeting.

   2022 SAC Accomplishments
   Chair Anderson presented accomplishments from written report and expressed appreciation and congratulations to the SAC. SAC member Clayton Whitacre highlighted the regional risk assessment and the insider threat training. Nations highlighted the security conference, and that other regions do not have the SAC, encouraged other SAC members to consider what information they may be able to provide.

   2022 SAC and SACTF Survey Results
   Chair Anderson presented the results of the annual survey. Operations Technology was discussed as an area of opportunity; SAC Member Peter Grandgeorge agreed, but stressed this does not necessarily indicate a lack, but simply further opportunities. Grandgeorge also highlighted opportunities related to learning lessons from the war in Ukraine and the grid impacts there. SAC member Daniel

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Graham indicated that issues related to IT may also be related to OT, and this may not be fully recognized.

Chair Anderson discussed communication, and that interactive opportunities such as the conference and the threat call showed particularly strong results. The SAC discussed opportunities to better organize past materials on the MRO website.

The SAC discussed how to encourage participants to offer potential topics, suggestion to ask more specific questions. A SAC member suggested it may be easier to recruit people to be part of a panel, rather than offering a full presentation at events. Fjalstad highlighted that MRO staff has availability to assist. The SAC also discussed republication of articles, and other outreach.

8. **2023 Security Conference Update**

    MRO Manager of Outreach and Stakeholder Engagement, Cris Zimmerman, provided a high-level overview of the 2023 Security Conference planning. Discussion ensued.

9. **SAC Draft 2023 Work Plan**

    The SAC discussed the draft 2023 work plan.

    Fjalstad highlighted that above the blue line items are how the SAC is measured. Discussion ensued.

    Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the SAC approved the draft 2023 work plan as is.

10. **Action Item Review**

    MRO Executive Administrator, Lisa Stellmaker, noted the action items captured during the meeting

11. **Other Business and Adjourn**

    The topic of how to proceed with the 2024 Security conference, considering the timing of GridSecCon was raised. Discussion ensued. No final decision was reached, and no motion was offered.

    Having no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 3:00 p.m.

Prepared by: Margaret Eastman, Security Administrator
Reviewed and Submitted by: Steen Fjalstad, Director of Security

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Exhibit A – Meeting Attendees

SAC Members Present	
Name	**Company**
Chad Wasinger	Sunflower Electric Power Corporation
Clayton Whitacre	Great River Energy
Daniel Graham	Basin Electric Power Cooperative
Douglas Peterchuck	Omaha Public Power District
Ian Anderson, Chair	OGE Energy Corp.
Jason Nations	OGE Energy Corp.
Justin Haar	Minnkota Power Cooperative
Matthew Szyda	Manitoba Hydro
Norma Browne	Ameren
Patrick Glunz	Nebraska Public Power District
Peter Grandgeorge	MidAmerican Energy Company
Rocky Tolentino	Southwest Power Pool
Tim Anderson	Dairyland Power Cooperative
MRO Staff Present	
Name	**Title**
Steen Fjalstad	Director of Security
Rebecca Schneider	Reliability Analysis Administrator
Lisa Stellmaker	Executive Administrator
Lauren Mcclary	Meeting Planner/Receptionist
Lee Felter	Principal Security Engineer
Mark Tiemeier	Principal Technical Advisor
Cris Zimmerman	Manager of Outreach and Stakeholder Engagement

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Joshua Hebert	Senior Compliance Engineer/Auditor, O&P
Dianlong Wang	Senior Power Systems Engineer
Jess Syring	Compliance Monitoring Manager, CIP
Larry Johnson	Principal Compliance Engineer/Auditor, CIP
Alex Pratt	Manager of IT Infrastructure
Chuck Seguin	Systems Administrator
Michael Taube	Principal RAM Engineer, CIP

Other Attendees	
Name	**Company**
Danny Johnson	Southwester Power Administration
Keith Lyons	Manitowoc Public Utilities
David Trojan	ITC Holdings Corp.
Ashley Calderon	Kansas City Board of Public Utilities
Jeff Parrish	Dominion Energy
Rebecca Mann	Sunflower Electric Power Corporation
Jessica Burdette	Minnesota Department of Commerce
Angela Wheat	Southwester Power Administration
Brian Capistrant	Xcel Energy
Andrew Coffelt	Kansas City Board of Public Utilities
Chuck Beesley	OGE
Dawne Massey	Western Farmers Electric Cooperative
Tara Lightner	Sunflower Electric Power Corporation
Richard Bou	Xcel Energy
Nazra Gladu	Manitoba Hydro
Tony Eddleman	Nebraska Public Power District
Olga Oswalt	Sunflower Electric Power Corporation

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Jeff Rivers	Sunflower Electric Power Corporation
Larry Brusseau	Corn Belt Power Cooperative
James Hauck	Sunflower Electric Power Corporation
Jeff Fuller	MISO
Mary Agnes Nimis	FERC
Benjamin Woodward	Evergy
Nation Vanmeter	Sunflower Electric Power Corporation
Steve Dale	Force5
Stephen McGie	Kansas City Board of Public Utilities
Daniel Moore	Western Farmers Electric Cooperative
Patrick Miller	Ampere Industrial Security

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