



Information Security
Specialist Group

Chair's report 2024

I am delighted to be able report on another very active and successful year for the Information Security Specialist Group.

ISSG continues to be the largest of all the BCS Specialist Groups with a membership of around 3,000. Our aim is to continue to support the BCS and our members throughout 2025 and beyond.

Successes

We delivered a successful events programme again this year, which was linked to themes (Post Quantum Cryptography, Cloud, Secure Architecture, Supply Chain, Standards) which were informed by a member consultation exercise. The programme included a 'sell-out' one-day BT Showcase event at their world-renowned research facility at Adastral Park.

We maintained our commitment to making our events accessible to all members by running them, wherever possible, in hybrid mode (i.e. in-person and via zoom).

We have also expanded our collaboration with other SGs where we have overlapping interests, delivering events jointly with IRMA, FinSIG and DevSecOps and to work (occasionally) with commercial partners who can assist with some sponsorship. I hope we can build on this in the coming year.

Beyond our events programme, ISSG has assisted the BCS with several HMG consultations, workgroups and policy papers including:

- DSIT - Protecting and enhancing the security and resilience of UK data infrastructure
- DSIT Cyber Governance - Call for views
- POST – Cyber Security of the Metaverse
- DSIT - Cyber Security of AI
- BCS Cyber Security Policy for new government
- DSIT Code of practice for software vendors

Committee members have presented on information security subjects, around the world for other voluntary industry forums, participated in BCS Policy Jams, been asked to contribute

to press releases and spoken about cyber-related issues and incidents on national radio. So ISSG is certainly a well-recognised 'brand' within BCS.

What's in a Name (ISSG)

Every couple of years, the committee consider how appropriate our name is to the areas we align with. We're acutely conscious that many people use the terms 'Information Security' and 'Cyber Security' interchangeably. Our committee remain of the opinion that, whilst there are huge areas of overlap, there are also some differences between the two disciplines. We considered embarking on a rebranding exercise to incorporate 'c' into our name but concluded that our group identity (usually quoted simply as 'ISSG') has become synonymous with all of the group's interests (i.e. 'Security', 'Cyber' and 'Privacy') both within BCS and beyond. Accordingly, we have decided to remain as 'ISSG' for the foreseeable future, but will work even harder at ensuring that our members and the wider BCS community recognise the full scope of our group's activities.

Plans for next year

Next year's event programme is already taking shape with the following events currently being arranged:-

- Mastering Cyber Strategy_ Winning Board Approval in 60 Minutes - sponsored and delivered by th4ts3cur1ty_company
- Cyber Essentials Update – Neil Furminger (IASME)
- Cyber issues particular to the Aviation/Maritime Sectors – Ken Munro (Pentest Partners)
- More events in our legal-series

This year, ISSG partnered with two external organisations who sponsored specific events and three other SGs to run joint events that were of interest to our members. We would like to continue to grow both forms of collaboration.

We also plan to trial a quarterly 'fireside chat' format with a panel. We hope this will also allow for much greater attendee participation. First event is being planned for Jan/Feb 2025.

Our group is formed predominantly of people in the 41-60 age range (63%) and where gender is predominantly male (83%). ISSG would like to engage with BCS HQ on identifying strategies to address this.

My thanks

I'd like to personally thank the secretary, vice-chairs, officers and committee members for their support and involvement throughout the year. ISSG simply couldn't function without them. Your committee members commit time and energy throughout the year, providing governance and direction for the group at committee meetings and horizon scanning

sessions. The committee are unpaid volunteers, many of whom have busy day-jobs, and who give of their time and energy to ensure the ISSG remains active and relevant for our members.

I would also like to thank Paul Skinner (ISSG Secretary), for all his work throughout 2024. Paul thought life would get quieter after retiring but finds himself busier than ever! I'm very grateful that Paul has agreed to continue as Secretary for another year (if elected), however he has made it clear that this would be his last, so I very much hope that someone from the 2024-25 committee will work with him, with the aim of taking over the position next time around.

Finally, the Member Groups team at BCS HQ perform a fantastic job supporting us with absolutely everything that we do. We would be unable to function as a group without assistance from our tremendous co-ordinator, Marie Setterfield. Marie's support, guidance (and above all, patience!) is hugely valued by me and I'd like to record my thanks.

Steve Sands

BCS ISSG Chairman