Oregon Cybersecurity Center of Excellence

Report for the Joint Committee on Information Management and Technology, Oregon Legislature

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Submitted by

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Background

- The HB2049, signed into law by Governor Tina Kotek in July 2023, established the Oregon Cybersecurity Center of Excellence (OCCOE) at Portland State University to be operated under the joint direction and control of three founding universities:

    - Portland State University,
    - Oregon State University, and
    - The University of Oregon (the "Founding Members").

- Whereas HB2024 stated the operations start date of OCCOE as October 1, 2023, it was not until November 16, 2023, that the three universities signed the Charter into force.

- The General Consuls of the founding universities are working on the Operating Agreement of the Center.

- The OCCOE Advisory Council appointed by Governor Kotek

Personnel

- Center Director and Associate Directors appointed.
  - Professor Birol Yesilada, Director (PSU) – 1.0 FTE
  - Professor Reza Rejaie, Associate Director (UO) – 0.50 FTE
  - Associate Professor Rakesh Bobba, Associate Director (OSU) – 0.50 FTE
- Senior Project Manager Hazel Yamada for Oregon Cyber Camps was hired at PSU.
- A part-time Program Coordinator position for OCCOE has been approved and hired at OSU. Michael Louie will support OCCOE activities from OSU at 0.5 FTE in Year 1 and 1.0 FTE in Year 2.
- Graduate Student Assistant hired at PSU. And another position planned.
- Interviewing candidates under review for
  - Finance and Operations Manager
  - Office Support Specialist
- A half-time project manager for outreach is planned for hiring in January 2023.

Workforce Development

- **ORTSOC at OSU**
    - the Nation's First Cybersecurity Teaching Hospital (https://ortsoc.oregonstate.edu - this past Fall with 20+ students. It offers its clients various security services, such as Security Monitoring, Security Assessment, Penetration Testing, and others.

    - OSU ORTSOC is serving or preparing to serve 8 organizations, including two small Oregon cities, two ESDs in eastern Oregon, one Oregon county, and one Oregon community college.

- **Cybersecurity Resilience Certificate for local governments at PSU**
    - The Congressional Directed Spending program covers the funding not allocated in the OCCOE Budget.

- **Cybersecurity undergraduate degree at UO**

- **Oregon Cyber Camp**
    - NW Cyber Camps team worked to develop coordinated proposals for the NSA GenCyber program and successfully obtained funding for 3 campsites for next summer.

    - These federal grants serve as a force multiplier to the funds provided by the State, allowing OCCOE to offer more campsites across the state. OCCOE aims to host 10 coordinated NW Cyber Camps across the state this Summer (2024).

Cybersecurity Certification Scholarship Fund

- OCCOE is working with Mt.Hood Community College (host institution for allocated funds) and other community colleges to set up and provide scholarships from the Cybersecurity Certification Scholarship Fund established to help students pay for cybersecurity certification exams often required for cybersecurity jobs.

Outreach

- Met with State of Oregon CIO Terrence Woods and hold monthly meetings with Oregon CISO Ben Gherezgiher to coordinate how OCCOE could assist in implementing the Oregon Cybersecurity Plan. The Center's duties include some items in the Oregon cybersecurity plan.

- Participated in cybersecurity summits and gave informational presentations on OCCOE to private sector companies, FBI, CISA, and CIOs of Oregon Universities and Community Colleges.

- Presented OCCOE to a national audience of National Centers of Academic Excellence in Cybersecurity.

- Joint Press release on OCCE by the three founding universities on January 8, 2024.

Outreach

- We are updating information on local governments, county governments, public libraries, community colleges, universities, and other public institutions in Oregon for their membership status with MS-ISAC.

- We plan to hold a one-day symposium on cybersecurity for local and regional governments, K12 school districts, community colleges, universities, tribal governments, public libraries, and other stakeholders during late Spring 2024.

  - This symposium aims to provide awareness through panel discussions and enable us to gather information on cybersecurity programs across Oregon. The information will enable OCCOE to assess the state of affairs and make recommendations for furthering collaboration and development of cybersecurity educational, research, and workforce development programs in the State. The symposium is planned at a central location that would enable the participation of representatives from rural areas.

- We started working on building a partnership between public, private, and academic institutions to better serve Oregonians in cybersecurity (awareness, education, workforce development, and better practices).

Oregon Cybersecurity Grant Program Fund

• OCCOE leadership has been meeting with the State CISO, Mr. Ben Gherezgiher, and his team on how best to coordinate our mandate. It has become clear that the $250,000 allocated as cost-share for local governments **falls very short** of the amount necessary during the current fiscal period 2023-2025.

• According to a letter submitted to the Co-Chairs of the September 2023 Interim Joint Committee on Ways and Means, the Oregon Department of Emergency Management (ODEM) indicated that there will be a match needed for each:

- ODEM (for grant management and administration activities),
- DAS Enterprise Information Services (for statewide projects), and
- Local eligible entities (for local projects).

- ODEM has submitted a match waiver request to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security Federal Emergency Management Agency, but a response has not yet been received.

Grant Program Shortfall

• If FEMA does not approve the match waiver request, IIJA SLCGP federal funding for local projects may be at risk as a funding source has not yet been identified for the local eligible entity match, which was **estimated to be $ 1,209,463.40** (20% of $6,047,317 available to local eligible entities during the 2023 grant year).

• With $250,000 in the CCOE Cybersecurity Grant Program fund, there is a **funding gap of approximately $950,000 in local eligible entity match for the Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2023 grant year and an additional estimated funding/match gap of between $2.5 and $3 Million combined for the remaining years of the IIJA SLCGP (FFY'24 and FFY'25)** based on information provided by the State CISO.

Thank You for Listening