

Rada, J MGMT 211 3.4 Cyber Security Case Study

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Conduct research on a recent threat or attack on a government agency, military organization, or corporate enterprise. Present data that describes the type of threat, the degree of harm caused by the threat, and describe who or what entity the perpetrator(s) might have been that could benefit from such an action. Give details on solutions that might have prevented the exploit and could be utilized to assist in mitigating or eliminating cyber threats in the future.

In 2015, there were two separate major incidents that affected both the Office of Personnel Management employees and U.S. National Guard members. The first incident conducted by hackers, "exposed sensitive information about at least 22.1 million people, including not only federal employees and contractors but their families and friends, U.S. officials said Thursday. The total vastly exceeds all previous estimates, and marks the most detailed accounting by the Office of Personnel Management of how many people were affected by cyber intrusions that U.S. officials have privately said were traced to the Chinese government" (Nakashima, 2015). The second Army National Guard breach affected more than 850,000 members and was not related to the OPM incident. The data was inadvertently transferred to a non-department of defense data center by a contract employee as part of a budget analysis. The data included soldier's names, social security numbers, dates of birth and home addresses. "All current and former Army National Guard members since 2004 could be affected by this breach because files containing personal information was inadvertently transferred to a Non-DoD-accredited data center by a contract employee, said Maj. Earl Brown, a spokesman for the National Guard Bureau" (Boland, 2015).

The first attack was done by hackers using stolen contractor logins and passwords. The fallout from the attack led to the resignation of Katherine Archuleta as director of OPM. The second incident was more of clerical error conducted by a contract employee due to poor security practices. Maj. Earl Brown, a National Guard Bureau spokesman said, "they do not believe the guardsmen's information will be used unlawfully" (Boland, 2015). For both incidents, "The U.S. government has said it will offer the affected employees at least three years of credit monitoring and other identity-protection services. But OPM faces rising anger among members of federal employee unions who say they have received scant information about the breaches" (Nakashima, 2015).

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The first attack occurred over a 6 month period which was discovered as a result of new cybersecurity tools that OPM had installed. Had the newer security protocols been installed earlier the breach might not have affected as many employees. In the case of the second attack, had better training took place the data wouldn't have been transferred in the first place.

References

Boland, B. (2015, July 11). *Washington Examiner*. Retrieved June 13, 2017, from Washington Examiner Web site: <http://www.washingtonexaminer.com/army-national-guard-suffers-its-own-data-breach/article/2568084>

Nakashima, E. (2015, July 09). *The Washington Post*. Retrieved June 13, 2017, from The Washington Post Web site: https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/federal-eye/wp/2015/07/09/hack-of-security-clearance-system-affected-21-5-million-people-federal-authorities-say/?utm_term=.a83df6425f80

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