

Minutes

TSA Supply Chain Sub-Group Meeting

- Friday 22 March 2024
- techUK, 10 St Bride Street, London, EC4A 4AD

Actions:

Invite TalkTalk/PX, Sky, Ciena, Vodafone, Fortinet to participate	New	Sophie Greaves
Update DSIT on Group activity	New	Sophie Greaves
Draw up Terms of Reference for Group	New	Sophie Greaves
Create page on techUK website where updates can be shared.	New	Sophie Greaves/Matthew Wild

Introductions and summary of the problem

Sophie Greaves began the workshop by summarising the principle issue: the untenable situation in the supply chain of multiple vendors and operators duplicating work and creating new interpretations and definitions for TSA compliance.

Attendees in the room raised additional concerns:

- Consistency of response from vendors.
- A need for the VSA piece to be grounded in understanding of the risk that is being managed rather than compliance for its own sake.
- That organisations are constrained legally by making specific security declarations.
- The need to avoid resource- and time-intensive audits and administrative processes.
- That it would be helpful for Ofcom to provide an explicit minimum requirement
- That compliance with regs can require a lot of heavy lifting (eg, update of large quantities of antiquated, 3rd-party code)

Key areas of focus & issues:

The group explored the inconsistent expectations with evidence supplied and VSA, as well as differing interpretations across industry. The TSA uses vague language and common, agreed interpretations are sought by industry. Standardisation and thought leadership would help with discussions, as well as a discussion paper (similar to the one published by the NICC for PECN and PECS).

The group also discussed how to scale testing, as recommended in the VSA, and whether there is possible to perform tests once, observed by multiple providers. Would this present issues with Ofcom?

The group also explored how resellers should factor into the topic.

There was broad enthusiasm for a clearly-defined breakdown of who in the supply chain is responsible for what part of testing as well as a baseline of TSA compliance for products, with bolted-on levels of additional compliance.

Second Session:

The group discussed the governance and membership of the Supply Chain Sub-Group, noting that the group is not a forum for wider TSA discussion. There was agreement to remain streamlined and agile in order to deliver progress. Not all parties need to be involved in all Sub-Group topics – and those topics may shift as work is delivered.

New members to the group should add value. Reiterated that transparency and frequent communications to the wider community will be required.

Action: Sophie Greaves to invite TalkTalk, Sky, Sienna, Vodafone, Fortinet and DSIT to participate in the group's work

Priorities:

The group outlined its upcoming priorities:

- Bridging the gap between the subgroup and Ofcom and ensuring the groups work is communicated to Ofcom, DSIT, or NCSC
- Lessons Learned session on VSA process
 - Vendors to provide security assessment
 - Check, analyse, and sustain piece
- Discussion paper backed by techUK, written from industry perspective. Operators and vendors have a common stake in this

Agreed Deliverables:

The group agreed on a discussion paper as an agreed deliverable. This would establish the factual challenges and negative impact of TSA on industry – while also flagging improvements and positive developments – to most effectively deliver on TSA compliance as industry. Non-members of the Supply Chain subgroup would be able to contribute to the paper.

Ways of Working and Terms of Reference:

The subgroup discussed how often it should meet and agreed that a chair/vice-chair were not necessary. It would like to be featured on the techUK website.

Action: Sophie Greaves to draw up a Terms of Reference

Action: techUK to create webpage to share info and updates with wider community.

Next meeting: Monday 15 April 2024, 15:00-16:30

Attendees

Company
BT
CityFibre
Cisco
Ericsson
Juniper
Nokia
Palo Alto Networks
techUK
techUK
Three