

Minutes

TSA Supply Chain Sub-Group

- Wednesday 22 May 2024
- 15:00-16:30
- Hybrid – in person (techUK) and online (MS Teams)
- Held under **TLP:Amber**

Action: Sophie Greaves (SG) to create a hub on techUK website for the group's work

Welcome and Introductions:

Sophie Greaves (SG) welcomed attendees, ran through housekeeping and the agenda. Members of the Sub-Group introduced themselves. Apologies were noted. The group agreed to the terms of reference posed by techUK following the previous meeting.

Recap of the group's objectives

The Sub-Group had agreed at its last meeting to produce a discussion paper outlining issues affecting group members from TSA and had requested a list of issues from members for collation. The discussion paper will list those issues, clarify why there is an issue (liability, interpretation, etc), outcomes of the issues, and provide recommendations agreed by the group to solve those issues. The paper will seek to solve some issues itself and will seek clarification on other issues.

Progress so far

SG thanked the group members for their contributions so far. techUK (with help from Cisco) has consolidated some issues either because of duplication or thematic connection. Each issue has been given a category and divided into 'general' or 'specific' plus a suggestion as to whether a question should be discussed by the group or with external stakeholders.

The 60+ issues identified are testament to the importance of the group's work.

SG proposed the following issues from the Sub-Group's working document for potential consolidation, and the group discussed the issues in question.

- 13, 17, 19, and 33
- 5, 29, and 31
- 1 and 14
- 39 and 44
- 4 and 9

The group discussed the importance of a balanced approach, rather than presenting a 'laundry list' of industry complaints. The group will distil the issues to a reasonable number

(noting some group members are new and will not have yet had input) before presenting to DSIT.

Walkthrough of the issues

The group noted that some issues may be removed from the list, due to finding quick solutions or resolving interpretation issues through group consensus.

Topics discussed included:

- Whether the VSA be split off as its own issue, and that it should offer flexibility.
- That Ofcom should be included in submissions to DSIT as there is a window of opportunity to engage senior stakeholders
- That testing and regimes for testing may be a global issue (see cyber security in Europe)
- That what good looks like and what UK Government/NCSC will accept is a broader question
- That there is no criteria for suppliers on whether operators' testing is good enough/sufficient and the precedent set by PSTI
- That trying to put together global standards may be more useful than UK-only standards and that if different products are deployed in different contexts, standardisation may be difficult
- The need to come up with a code of practice for NCSC supply chain that is outcomes based without being too prescriptive. The TSA haven't struck the right balance between scalability, flexibility, and outcomes
- That ITF's/RFT's have been standardised. Industry needs Ofcom/DSIT to not hinder the vendors and ecosystems and look at recommended industry certifications. Industry is currently paying to test products before they even know if the product is viable. Operators already do PEN-tests and there is no reason to test generic products.
- That Ofcom/DSIT risk going against their own objectives of having a diverse telecoms vendor landscape in the UK. Excessive testing expectations may crowd SME's out of the market (counter to the Diversification of Supply Chain strategy)

AOB and Close

SG took as an action the task to find a suitable hub on the techUK website for the Sub-Group's work, noting the group's preference to remain closed to new members.

The next meeting will take place from 10:00-11:30 on 26 June.

Attendees

BT Group
Cisco
Cityfibre
Ericsson
Fortinet
Juniper Networks
MBNL
NCC Group
Nokia
Palo Alto Networks
PlatformX Communications
techUK
Three UK
Virgin Media O2