



Information Security
Specialist Group

Chair's report 2023

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

This year sees the 40th anniversary of the group, initially formed by David Lindsay & Phil Phillips in 1983 as the 'Computer Security Specialist Group'. We celebrated the milestone with an event at BCS London for BCS staff, ISSG committee members (past and present) and invited guests, including David Lindsay's widow and daughter and Phil Phillips. Phil treated us to some great memories and recollections of the early days of CSSG/ISSG. We considered the past, present and future of information security and concluded that, whilst technology has changed (and will continue to do so), many of the fundamental principles of information security which applied in 1983 still hold true today. Sarah Armstrong-Smith (Microsoft Chief Security Advisor) finished the formal part of the day with a keynote presentation entitled 'Back to the Future' after which we enjoyed a couple of hours of networking.

Our other events this year have been a mix of online and hybrid. Whilst we have enjoyed being able to run face-to-face events again, we will retain our commitment to ensure our events are accessible to all members. A number of events are already in the planning stage for 2024, including a BT Security Showcase at Adastral Park (likely to be in April).

Beyond our events programme, ISSG has assisted the BCS with a number of consultations and workgroups on topics including: Preparing for Post Quantum Computers (F-TAG), Computer Misuse Act 1990 review (Home Office), Cyber Risk (DSIT) and Service & Software Resilience (BCS ITLF).

I'd like to personally thank the vice-chairs, officers and committee members for their active participation and involvement throughout the year, providing governance and direction for the group through 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. We introduced horizon scanning meetings this year to help us track evolving and emerging technology and security themes and to manage the planning and delivery of relevant events for our members. I believe the change has been successful and has enabled us to become more disciplined with the timing and duration of our meetings.

The Member Groups team at BCS HQ continue to support 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.

I would also like to thank Paul Skinner (ISSG Secretary), for all his work throughout 2023. On top of everything else that he does, Paul masterminded the planning and logistics for our ISSG@40 event. Without all his work behind the scenes it simply wouldn't have happened!

ISSG continues to be the largest of all the BCS Specialist Groups with a membership of well over 3,000. Our aim is to continue to support the BCS and our members throughout 2024 and beyond. I look forward to another party after the next 40 years!

Steve Sands

BCS ISSG Chairman