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The National Academy of Public Administration Releases Report For U.S. Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA)

*Academy Panel Recommends the Creation of a Coordinated
National Strategy for Cybersecurity Workforce Development*

WASHINGTON, D.C. – A Panel of the National Academy of Public Administration today released “[A Call to Action: The Federal Government’s Role in Building a Cybersecurity Workforce for the Nation](#),” a report for the U.S. Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) that provides recommendations for building a national strategy for cybersecurity workforce development.

“Cybersecurity poses a tremendous challenge and there is growing demand for cybersecurity workers who can protect the systems that enable so many aspects of our lives and our economy,” said Terry Gerton, President and CEO of the Academy. “The Panel’s findings and recommendations strongly support the development of an effective cybersecurity workforce, which can be done only by creating and executing a well-coordinated strategic plan.”

The Academy Panel found that while CISA and other agencies have made progress on individual cybersecurity workforce-focused programs, no government-wide strategy yet exists to help set priorities or focus attention and resources—nor is there a formal plan to develop such a strategy. This lack of a government-wide strategy has resulted in lost opportunities for synergy across programs and hindered the federal government’s ability to tap capabilities and resources in the private sector, academia, and state, local, tribal, and territorial governments.

The Panel believes the 2021 establishment of the Office of the National Cyber Director (ONCD) in the White House presents an opportunity to create a national strategy for workforce development. To this end, the Panel makes the following recommendations:

The ONCD should lead the development of a national strategy for cybersecurity workforce development in consultation with DHS/CISA, the Office of

Management and Budget (OMB), and leaders of relevant federal agencies. The strategy should include four key elements:

- Encouraging more people to choose a career in the cybersecurity field through outreach and education
- Enabling education and training to build needed competencies and alternative career pathways
- Overcoming barriers to recruiting talent and matching people to jobs
- Assessing performance and promoting innovation in workforce development practice

The Panel further recommends that ONCD establish governance structures to ensure coordination and collaboration across agencies and departments involved in cybersecurity workforce development initiatives. ONCD should also be given authorities commensurate to the task, including budget and performance assessment and data abilities to determine how well programs perform and how best to scale or adjust investments.

The Panel also finds that CISA has generally performed well in planning, designing, and executing its cybersecurity national workforce development programs, given constraints of time, authorities, and resources. However, the Panel concludes that CISA's ability to fully address related challenges will depend on Congress providing the authorities to enable CISA to partner effectively with educational and training institutions and the staff needed to manage programs at scale. Success will depend on clarity about and sustained support for a national cybersecurity workforce development function.

The report is the result of an FY 2021 Consolidated Appropriations Act directive that the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) engage the Academy to review CISA strategies and programs related to building a national cybersecurity workforce.

To read the full report, including specific findings and recommendations, click [here](#).

About the National Academy of Public Administration

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