Meeting FISMA Training Requirements through Security Awareness and Role-Based Training:
An FBI Case Study

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Abstract

The FBI is under increasing scrutiny, from government oversight bodies to malicious individuals seeking to infiltrate FBI networks and systems. Meanwhile, the ratification of the Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA) imposes mandates on every federal agency, including the FBI, pertaining to IT Security training. In particular, FISMA requires that all agencies provide role-based training to individuals with significant IT responsibility, and an information security awareness training course to all employees and contractors.

The FBI's IT employee base has grown in recent years to meet the growing external challenges, as well as the internal necessity brought on by increasing workloads. These three factors; the external oversight, increased attacks on the network and FISMA, combined with a large pool of individuals who need uniform security training, led the FBI to seek a efficient, economical IT Security training package.

After exploring several options, the FBI chose a web-based IT Security Library (ITSL) offered by Karta Technologies, Inc. The solution also included a customized Security Awareness course and an on-site resource to help with training implementation and management.

With the IT Security Library, the FBI was able to ensure that there was consistency in the training received by IT teams separated by thousands of miles and all employees and contractors received an annual Security Awareness course, which includes critical FBI policies and procedures.

Furthermore, the FBI has been able to present a training program recognized by the intelligence community, which costs less per training hour than any other method. Dollar for dollar, the FBI has accomplished far more with the ITSL than they would have with any other training product.

Most importantly, the FBI has addressed the FISMA training mandates using the ITSL and the General Information Security Awareness course, and they have done so in a consistent, efficient and cost-effective manner.