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## Booz Allen Hamilton breach reflects widespread security failures, expert says

Washington Business Journal - by Jill R. Aitoro  
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[Booz Allen Hamilton Inc.](#), which recently launched a recruitment push for cybersecurity talent and partnered with the [University of Maryland](#) to offer a cybersecurity curriculum to students, was hacked Monday by a group that said its computer network "had no security measures in place."



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The hacker group "Anonymous" Monday posted details about the hack to piratebay.org, a website used by hackers to share files, saying that it was able to pull roughly 90,000 military emails from the contractor's systems by running its own malicious software. It also wiped 4 gigabytes of source code from the system and added code to various Booz Allen servers after stealing log-in credentials.

Booz Allen "didn't implement continuous daily monitoring and a mitigation program, and they didn't implement a a strong 'hunter' program" to identify potential threats before they cause damage to the computer systems, said **Alan Paller**, director of research at SANS Institute, a nonprofit cybersecurity research organization in Bethesda. "They do that for a very small number of their clients, but don't seem to have enough people with the right skills to do it for themselves."

Among those skills, Paller added, are deep network and system forensics, malware analysis and reverse engineering capabilities.

**Pat Howard**, chief information security officer with the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, said any report about a compromised system will get the attention of federal agencies, but won't necessarily create a black mark for the contractor in the long term.

"One's eyebrows almost always go up when another organization is exposed to a successful attack," he said. "However, government CISOs [chief information security officers] understand the threat is persistent and dynamic, and that all organizations could find themselves in a similar situation if they are not vigilant."


Booz Allen has yet to respond to news of the breach, with a spokesman saying that the company "generally [does] not comment on specific threats or actions taken against our systems."

Cybersecurity has been among the growth markets identified by Booz Allen, which is actively recruiting cybersecurity talent and partnered with the University of Maryland to launch a cybersecurity graduate certificate program in October 2010.


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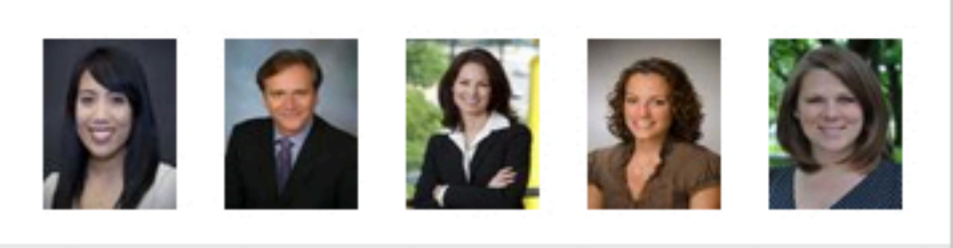
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