

Proving Once Again the Government is Terrible at Cybersecurity - Census Bureau Was Hacked

August 18, 2021 - We should probably be used to this by now. The federal government has been hacked so many times, and so much sensitive data has been exposed, that it shouldn't be a surprise anymore. But it is. The latest government agency to be hacked appears to be the US Census Bureau.

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A new report from the Census Bureau IG says that the agency was hacked in January 2020. Fortunately, the firewalls in place on the servers prevented the hackers from stealing data, but they were able to create user accounts and they managed to go undetected for a couple of weeks. The reason that they were undetected is because notification software installed on the servers was misconfigured.

What did they learn from the hack? Not much, from the looks of it.

According to the report, the servers that were hacked were running a no-longer-supported operating system. But since the report didn't name the system, we can't name it either. Moreover, the report noted that when the hack occurred, the servers were within a year of their end-of-life, but it goes on to say that as of February of this year, those servers were still in service.

According to the report, no data from the 2020 census was impacted by the hack and no personal information of citizens was exposed. That may provide some solace but overall, the government's approach to cybersecurity is more than underwhelming. In the private sector, it would probably be criminal.

by Jim Malmberg

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