

# Association of Information Security Professionals



1st Issue



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# President's Note



Dear AISP Member

First of all, my warmest wishes to all members and supporters of AISP for a Happy New Year, and to our Chinese friends, Gong Xi Fa Cai! It is my pleasure to announce the launch of the first issue of the AISP e-Newsletter. I am very grateful to 3 members who have very kindly agreed to form the initial Editorial Committee. The Committee is led by Jimmy Sng - (PricewaterhouseCoopers) and he is supported by Patrick Lim (ITE) and Cecil Su (Grant Thornton).

AISP is barely a year old. It was officially launched on 17 April 2008 by Dr Vivian Balakrishnan, Minister for Community Development, Youth and Sports. Over the last 8 months, the EXCO has worked hard on various fronts to build the foundations of the Association:

- set up the secretariat (thanks to Singapore Computer Society for allowing us to use their premises for the secretariat and for providing extensive support to us to get going from scratch)
- launched our AISP web-site – thanks to Nanyang Polytechnic, Superinternet and Singapore Computer Society for their support
- organised events – social networking, event talks and academic series seminars (special thanks to Singapore Management University for sponsoring the venue for the Academic series seminars and our speakers from Microsoft and ThinkSecure)
- assisted the NICF Technical Committee (one of our Vice Presidents, George Wang, sat on the NICF steering committee and chaired the NICF info security sub-committee) on developing the Information Security Competency Framework – identifying the competency categories
- formed a AISP Steering Committee to help IDA guide and vet the development of the Information Security Book of Knowledge; Ramesh Moosa and Martin Khoo (IDA) are co-chairs of this Steering Committee
- ventured into the Institutions of Higher Learning (IHL)– starting with SMU which signed a Memorandum of Understanding with AISP on 23 October 2008 to form the first Student Chapter member of AISP; we are currently in discussion with other IHLs in Singapore to create more Student Chapters
- signed a collaborative agreement with ISC2 on 3 November 2008 to join their Affiliated Local Interest Group (ALIG) program, which effectively enables joint collaboration in professional development events in Singapore and also recognition of AISP events for (ISC)2's Continuing Professional Education (CPE) program
- supported GovWare 2008

In 2009, work continues to build up the foundation stones and programs to fully establish AISP as the professional body for Information Security Professionals in Singapore. Members should note in their diaries an important event this April - AISP will co-organise with IDA a flagship Information Security conference confirmed for 2-3 April 2009. We look forward to your support of this event. We will also embark on another major project to develop and launch the AISP certification program to help those without a relevant information security qualification to take courses and sit for an examination to accelerate their ability to qualify

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for Ordinary membership. Started in 2008, we will build into our calendar a whole host of monthly evening talks and social networking events to bring members together to network. We will also ramp up the Academic series seminars to provide Continuing Professional Education to allow members to earn their credits for AISP membership accreditation and also other professional bodies that our members belong to. Last but not least, on the planning board is a CSO Roundtable to be held this year to provide a forum for CSOs to exchange views on information security topics of current interest to the industry.

In times of recession, it is natural for members and potential members to question the need for supporting, signing up and actively participating in activities with professional bodies like AISP when there are other more pressing priorities. Whilst we should empathise deeply with this feeling, I urge everyone not to take their eyes off their own need for continued professional development. It is an investment that must surely pay off when the economy turns around and demand for information security professionals will pick up again.

AISP will do its best to help members in these hard times by heavily subsidising the cost of events and seminars so that members will be able to attend to earn their CPE credits, network and upgrade themselves professionally. As you have seen, some of our events are already free to members. We will continue to do this as long as needed and we are financially able to.

We urge all our members to continue to support your professional association by renewing your membership and encouraging others in the industry to join us. Let us all together contribute in whatever way we can to build up our national body for information security professionals. It is your association and we are the pioneers. That means that it falls on our shoulders to build up the association. It is a great challenge as it is always much more difficult to build up a name and brand from scratch than to join an established association and continue to fly the flag. To those who have come forward to be part of this process, the EXCO and the members, you can be justifiably proud. We sincerely thank you for your strong support.

We look forward to writing to you regularly from now on, monthly if possible. We start humbly, and over the months, we hope to enrich this e-newsletter with material of value and interest to you all. We need your help to achieve this. If you would like to help Jimmy Sng and his team by joining his Editorial Board, to contributing articles, opinions and other interesting material for future issues of this e-newsletter, please contact him at [jimmy.sng@sg.pwc.com](mailto:jimmy.sng@sg.pwc.com) (tel: 6236 3354).

Once again, best wishes for the New Year and we look forward to seeing all of you at our forthcoming events.

Gerard Tan  
President  
Association of Information Security Professionals

## Global Recession: The Red Bull For Cybercrime – *Jimmy Sng*



*“In the middle of every difficulty lies opportunity” – Albert Einstein*

That’s the message I got after reading McAfee’s annual cyber security study in which experts warned that the global recession is fuelling fraudulent activities as cybercriminals exploit on negative human psyche – fear and anxiety during these uncertain times.

The report indicates that cybercriminals will be cashing in on the fact that the economic downturn will cause people to turn to the web to suss out the best deals, job opportunities and to manage their finances. In the current economic climate, consumers are more vulnerable for the money-related scams. At the same time, desperate job seekers may be recruited as ‘money mules’ to launder cybercriminal gains under the guise of ‘international sales representatives’ or ‘shipping managers’.

Cybercrime activity will be further fuelled as governments are distracted with a larger challenge – saving the economy. It is expected that dealing with cyber-security will slide down the government agenda, greatly overshadowed on a long list of anti-recession initiatives.



Besides layoffs and dwindling profits, recession also spell another problem for companies: increased insider threats. Tough economic times create uncertainty and stress in the workplace as employees become concerned with job security and financial liabilities. This makes the companies more vulnerable to threats, which may manifest in several ways. Employees with access to corporate information such as customer data may steal or disclose it for financial gains or just to get back at the company. Technical savvy employees may seek to plant logic bombs to sabotage the company’s operations in case they get laid off.

It is without a doubt that recession will fuel cybercrime; the question is to what extent? I leave you with my predictions for 2009:

1. Email scams will scream titles such as ‘Pre-approved loans’, ‘Best mortgages’ and ‘Top 10 stocks’. These will replace the familiar titles that advertise cheap replica watches and passion-enhancing drugs;
2. Bogus job sites promising immediate job placements, but in reality is a site collecting online identities;
3. Proliferation of banking phish sites promising attractive loan rates, re-financing options and high interest rates;
4. Online shops selling cheap and downloadable “legal” software, games and movies, which in fact are pre-loaded with malware and spyware. Another variant will be stock and currency swap prediction software infected with key-logger;
5. Increased theft of company data ranging from credit card information, customer mailing list, compensation and benefits spreadsheets and yes, even the bosses’ emails.

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2009

Event	Date	Venue
Academic Series: Evening talk on Service Oriented Security by Mr Ronald Van Kleunen	20 Feb 2009	SMU Seminar Room
AISP 1 <sup>st</sup> Annual General Meeting	25 March 2009	SCS Resource Centre
Academic Series: Network Security by Mr Benjamin Tan	March 2009	SMU Seminar Room
AISP Networking Nite	March 2009	To Be Advised
AISP-IDA Security Conference 2009	2 April 2009	Suntec City Convention
AISP-IDA Security Workshop 2009	3 April 2009	SMU Seminar Room
Tool kit for career development in adverse market conditions by Mr Andrew Sansom	April 2009	To Be Advised
CSO Workshop	June 2009	To Be Advised

