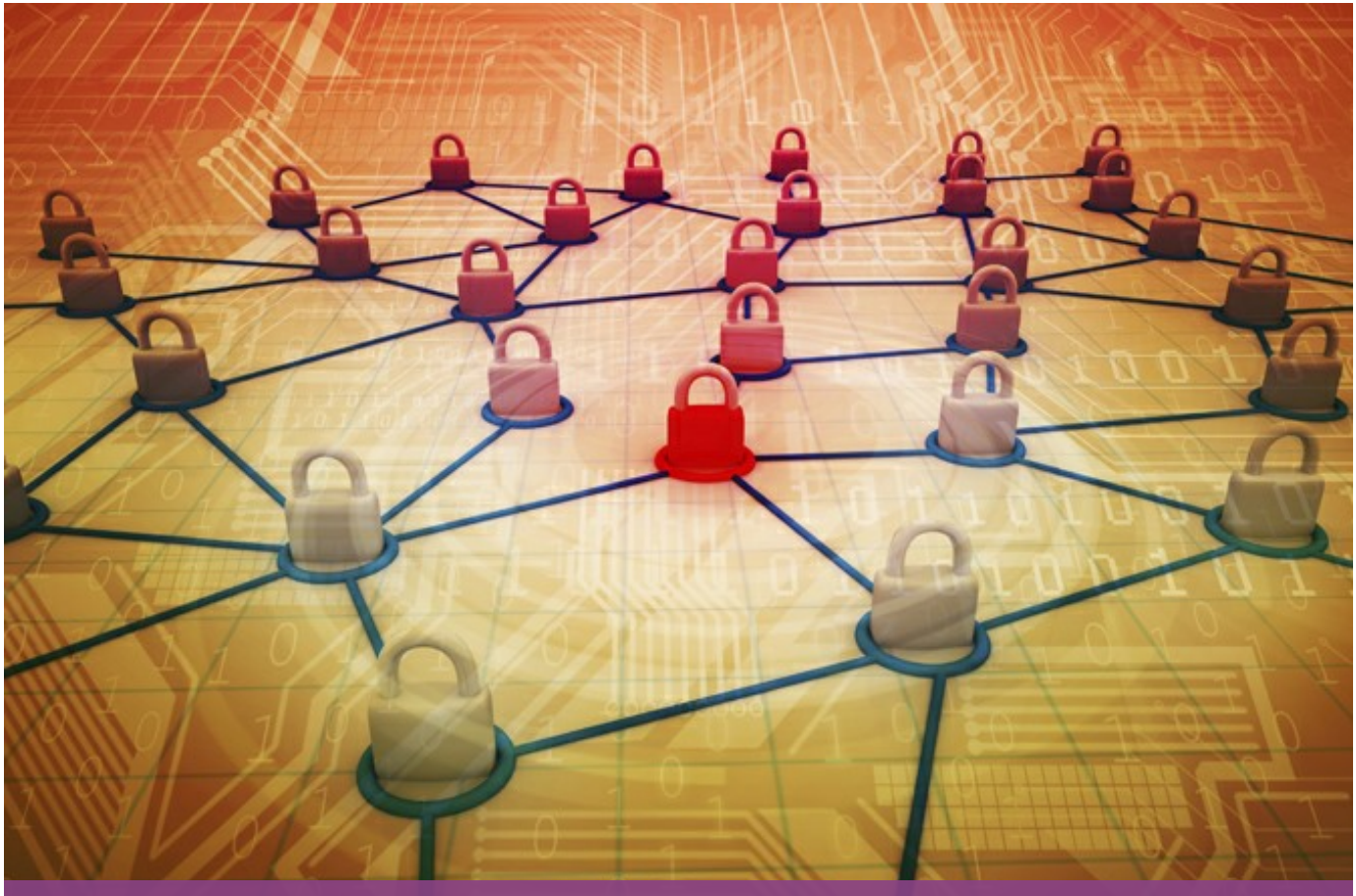


## White House announces new cyber threat agency



James J. Giszczak, Dominic A. Paluzzi | Tuesday, February 10, 2015

Today, the White House formally announced it will create a new agency to combat cyber threats and coordinate digital intelligence among federal government agencies. The agency will be called the Cyber Threat Intelligence Integration Center and is being designed to “connect the dots” among cyber threats facing the United States, “so that relevant departments and agencies are aware of these threats in as close to real time as possible,” an official for the White House said. According to [The Washington Post](#), the agency’s mission will be to fuse intelligence from around the government when a crisis occurs. This is the White House’s latest attempt to mount a defense against the rising threat of sophisticated hackers.

While some believe the CIA, FBI, FTC, NHS, DHS, and other government agencies are (or should be) handling these types of threats, the fact of the matter is that they are not. As the White House official made clear, “No existing agency has the responsibility for performing these functions,” which is why gaps need to be filled to “help the federal government meet its responsibilities in cybersecurity.”

The agency will be tasked with integrating intelligence from various agencies and distributing information more broadly to other federal divisions. Many believe this is necessary because, in light of the recent high profile breaches like Sony and Anthem, there is a fear that the government is not sharing enough information internally to prevent future attacks.

The announcement of this new federal agency comes on the heels of President Obama’s State of the Union Address where he solidified national cyber security defense as a top priority, and his earlier announcement

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to the Federal Trade Commission of two pieces of **proposed legislation** that seek to streamline digital privacy in the areas of breach notification and student privacy while promoting information sharing between the government and private sector about security vulnerabilities and potential cyber threats. The creation of the agency appears to be the logical next step in the White House's broader plan to increase privacy standards and protect national security and corporate interests from cyberattacks.

The \$35 million agency will be created through presidential memorandum (allowed by the 2004 Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act) and, therefore, bypass congressional approval.

The announcement was made by Lisa Monaco, assistant to the President for homeland security and counterterrorism, and likely previews a speech the President is slated to give at a cybersecurity summit at Stanford University later this week. Ms. Monaco said, "The threat is becoming more diverse, more sophisticated and more dangerous, and I worry that malicious attacks...will increasingly become the norm unless we adapt quickly and take a comprehensive approach."

Despite these new government efforts, the burden still rests on the private sector to protect itself. The phrase "it's not if, but when, you will be subject to a data breach" is not white noise. It is reality. A reality that requires the private sector to go on the offense, implementing more proactive measures and being prepared to deal with the inevitable.

For more information, please contact one of the attorneys listed below.

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