

IS NORTH EAST

Terms of Reference revised November 2015

Summary

Information Security North East (ISNorthEast) is a forum for council and public service information security managers from Northumberland, Tyne and Wear, Durham and the Tees Valley¹.

ISNorthEast is also the [Warning, Advice & Reporting Point](#)² for the north east government community (NEGWARP).

ISNorthEast facilitates the organisations to share good practice, exchange views and address security issues facing local government and its partners that could potentially be affecting everyone.

Membership is by organisation rather than individual. ISNorthEast has around 50 participating individuals representing 30 organisations (all of the Region's councils plus national government agencies, academia, transport, healthcare co-ordination and commissioning organisations and emergency services).

Members (organisations' representatives) benefit from peer review and support which saves significant cost by reducing the time it takes to resolve issues they are facing in their own organisations. Often one organisation will have come across an issue and worked a solution ahead of others, whilst for a different problem another will be able to share advice.

Purpose

ISNorthEast seeks to

- Provide a safe, geographically-relevant forum to discuss challenges and problems being faced by members
- Share knowledge, experience, good practice and, where appropriate, resources
- Forge meaningful relationships with Government and private organisations
- Fully exploit economies of scale
- Explore the possibilities of funded initiatives
- Heighten awareness of information security in the North East of England
- Influence policy and best practice

This has proven especially useful in pursuing BS7799/ISO 27001 and GCSx / PSN Code of Connection compliance.

¹ ISNorthEast was founded in 2006 as the North East Regional BS7799 Working Group; it was named ISNorthEast in 2013 and formally registered as the Warning, Advice & Reporting Point for the north east government community (NEGWARP) which links it to a national network of WARPs, the Centre for the Protection of National Infrastructure (CPNI) and GCHQ's Communications-Electronics Security Group (CESG).

² WARPs are part of the Centre for the Protection of National Infrastructure's (CPNI) information sharing strategy to help combat the increasing risk of electronic attack on our information systems. WARPs have been shown to be effective in improving information security by stimulating better communication of alerts and warnings, improving awareness and education, and encouraging incident reporting.

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Benefits

ISNorthEast benefits include:

1. *Advice Brokering*
 - Regular meetings.
 - A secure online collaboration space to support discussion and knowledge sharing.
 - Information security news stories and developments curated from a number of different sources distributed as a daily email newsletter.
 - Best practice shared with other local authority WARPs.
2. *Trusted Sharing*
 - Members share information about security incidents anonymised if required, so that everyone can benefit from lessons learned.
 - Access to information from other local authority WARPs.
 - Councils must report incidents to CESG (the UK National Technical Authority); WARPs are the primary interface between the two.
3. *Critical Alerts via the ISNorthEast warnings and notifications network*
 - Members notify each other of critical issues using an online messaging solution.
4. *Warnings via the ISNorthEast warnings and notifications network*
 - Notifications and alerts on viruses, malware and software vulnerabilities are curated from a number of different sources including other local authority WARPs and distributed by email.

ISNorthEast members have made valuable contributions to a wide range of projects and initiatives such as:

- A number of training and information update workshops including:
 - Mobile Device Management and Bring Your Own Device
 - Public Service Network compliance
 - Data protection – reducing risk with reduced budget
 - Identity and Remote Access
- Participated in research studies such as a local PSN investigation
- Determining the national IA requirements for PSN
- Undertaking peer audits for ISO 27001, saving costs on external consultancy
- Joint procurement for penetration testing, CLAS consultancy and IT Healthcheck services

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Membership

Membership of ISNorthEast is open to public service organisations in the north east region and their outsourced delivery partners. Members from organisations outside the north east region may be admitted at the forum's discretion.

At least one representative of the organisation is to participate in the warnings and notifications network and to notify fellow members of critical issues in a timely manner. Those organisations without a participant in the warnings and notifications network shall be deemed to be ISNorthEast members but not members of the NEGWARP.

Members agree to act according to the ISNorthEast code of conduct.

There is currently no charge to join or participate in ISNorthEast. ISNorthEast is facilitated by the North Eastern ICT Partnership. Its Partnership Analyst facilitates and provides management and secretarial support to the forum.

Meetings

ISNorthEast will aim to meet at least four times a year.

Meetings shall be Chaired by the nominated Chair (or Vice Chair).

All members of ISNorthEast can ask for an item to go on the agenda. The Chair will make the final decision about whether it is included on the agenda. The agenda and supporting reports will be circulated in advance.

Members of the public are not entitled to attend ISNorthEast meetings although the Chair may invite guest speakers and/or colleagues from the public service or IS community to participate.

An Annual General Meeting shall be held at the meeting nearest the beginning of April. At this meeting:

- The Chair will review the previous year's activities
- Representation and Membership will be reviewed
- A Chair and Vice-Chair (who will deputise for and support the Chair as necessary) will be elected by majority vote of those organisations represented at the meeting (one vote per organisation), They will be members (regularly attending meetings and participating in the warnings and notifications network) and be IS/IA/IG practitioners from separate organisations.

Formal notice will be given for nominations and of the AGM arrangements.

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Chair's responsibilities

- Chair ISNorthEast meetings
- To champion and promote the work of ISNorthEast among Information Security, Information Governance and ICT related professionals from local authorities and partner organisations
- Work closely with the Vice Chair and NEICT Partnership Analyst to steer and direct activities of ISNorthEast
- Provide thought leadership on public sector information security in the region
- By example, encourage sharing of knowledge and experience throughout the ISNorthEast membership.
- Assist in identification of potential speakers and topics of interest for the members of ISNorthEast
- To liaise with and provide a single point of contact with regional and national organisations such as CERT and CESG in order to further the aims of ISNorthEast.

Vice Chair's responsibilities:

- Chair ISNorthEast meetings in the absence of the Chair
- To champion and promote the work of ISNorthEast among Information Security, Information Governance and ICT related professionals from local authorities and partner organisations
- Work closely with the Chair and NEICT Partnership Analyst to steer and direct activities of ISNorthEast
- Support thought leadership on public sector information security in the region
- By example, encourage sharing of knowledge and experience throughout the ISNorthEast membership.
- Assist in identification of potential speakers and topics of interest for the members of ISNorthEast
- To assist with contact with regional and national organisations such as CERT and CESG in order to further the aims of ISNorthEast.

Manager / Secretary's responsibilities:

- To facilitate communications between ISNorthEast members and between ISNorthEast and external organisations
- To manage the ISNorthEast web presence (ISNorthEast.org.uk), Discussion, Warnings and Cisp online facilities used by ISNorthEast
- To raise issues regarding the operations of ISNorthEast with the NEICT Partnership as necessary
- To champion and promote the work of ISNorthEast among Information Security, Information Governance and ICT related professionals from local authorities and partner organisations
- Work closely with the Chair and Vice Chair to steer and direct activities of ISNorthEast
- Support thought leadership on public sector information security in the region
- By example, encourage sharing of knowledge and experience throughout the ISNorthEast membership.
- Assist in identification of potential speakers and topics of interest for the members of ISNorthEast
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ISNorthEast Code of Conduct

In participating in ISNorthEast all members shall:

- Participate in the ISNorthEast online community of interest.
- Be committed to continuous improvement.
- Be prepared to help each other.
- Clearly communicate with each other.
- Work together for the greater good.
- Make any declarations of personal interest or organisational interest.
- Maintain confidentiality within ISNorthEast, in particular not sharing sensitive information with 3rd parties.
- Operate in an open, accessible, responsive and accountable manner.
- Ensure they conduct themselves in a way that promotes a culture of mutual respect.
- Promote the benefits of ISNorthEast membership within their organisations.

Further information is available from:

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www.ISNorthEast.org.uk

www.neict.org

[@neict](#)

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