IT Security Awareness for Everyone

The *ITsafe* Initiative

Ian Bryant
Head of *ITsafe* Service

TF-CSIRT Meeting
12 May 2005
The ITsafe Initiative

- Drivers for ITsafe
- Design considerations
- Service implementation
- Questions?
The ITsafe Initiative

► Drivers for ITsafe

• Design considerations

• Service implementation

• Questions?
ICT Usage Segmentation

ICT = Information and Communication Technologies
UK Response Team Audiences - 2004

- **UNIRAS (NISCC)**
  - [http://www.niscc.gov.uk](http://www.niscc.gov.uk)

- **Organisational CSIRT(s)**

- **WARP(s) (NISCC)**
  - [http://www.warp.gov.uk](http://www.warp.gov.uk)

- **Central Government**
- **CNI**
- **Other Large Organisations**
- **Communities of Interest**
- **Microbusinesses**
- **Citizens**

No coverage
UK Response Team Audiences - 2005

- **ITsafe** (NISCC) 
  http://www.itsafe.gov.uk

- **UNIRAS** (NISCC) 
  http://www.niscc.gov.uk

- **WARP(s)** (NISCC) 
  http://www.warp.gov.uk

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- Drivers for ITsafe

Design considerations

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Challenge: Credibility and Trust

• Audience Research revealed an interesting dichotomy:
  – A general feeling that in order to be untainted by commercial influences, an Alerting Service should be run by Government
  – But a contradictory fear of some form of “Big Brother” aspect to the service

• The service needs to be clearly marketed as Independent and Official …

• … but the role of Governmental organisations that generate a Big Brother reaction in the audience has to been downplayed
Challenge: Information Overload

- Care must be taken not to “cry wolf!”
- Monitor all Open Sources for Threats and Vulnerabilities relevant to Target Audience
  - Formalised Triage, main source UNIRAS
- Review “below Threshold”
  - May still need to issue advice to calm down hype
  - Most issues have “Proof of Concept” before become major risk, so aim to write and validate “How To …” in advance
**Challenge: Risk Perception**

- Perception of Risk tends to be very subjective
  - Many of target audience will be scared of flying …
  - … but not of travelling by car
- A technological Risk such as Electronic Attack is even more difficult to communicate
  - Legacy of “£million damage” stories not helpful
- Risk Communication strategy must therefore seek to:
  - Educate the target audience as to relative Risk
  - Find a non-emotive way of expressing Risks
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ITsafe Project Summary

- Scoping Study (2003-4)
- Project Initiation (2 Jun 2004)
- Staff Recruitment / Training (Jul - Oct 2004)
- Baseline Process Development (Aug - Dec 2004)
- Pilot Phase Commences (Nov 2004)
- FATs and SATs (Jan 2005)
- Launch Event (Feb 2005)
Brand Identity

- **ITsafe**
  - IT Security Awareness
  - Safe “device” will be Trademarked
  - Colour Scheme alliterative
    - (Sapphire and Saffron)
- Government and Independent
  - .GOV.UK namespace
- Website designed for maximum usability
  - Low resolution / bandwidth
  - Strict XHTML
## ITsafe Triage

When to issue **Plain Language** advice … often linked to pre-written “How To …” on the website

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Important?</th>
<th>Urgent?</th>
<th>Important?</th>
<th>Urgent?</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Alert* (email/SMS)</td>
<td>Bulletin (email)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Advisory (website)</td>
<td>Nothing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* = May also use broadcast media / teletext if particularly time critical
ITsafe – The Launch

- Launched by Home Office Minister Hazel Blears MP

- Website available at http://www.itsafe.gov.uk

- Email / SMS service live
ITsafe – Initial Results

Email users
SMS users
Web Visits

Baseline
Feb 05
Mar 05
Apr 05
May 05
Jun 05
Jul 05
Aug 05
Sep 05
Oct 05
Nov 05
Dec 05
Jan 06
Feb 06
Mar 06
Overall
The ITsafe Initiative

• Drivers for ITsafe
• Design considerations
• Service implementation

► Questions?
**ITsafe in Summary**

- *ITsafe* has been specifically designed to address the needs of the private citizen, and of micro-businesses, who are not served by “conventional” CSIRTs
  - Government initiative
  - Provides a free Alerting service for online users on risks such as computer viruses and worms
- Accompanying the *ITsafe* warnings is a website populated with Good Practice Guidance and advice
- *ITsafe* is now live
Questions?

Comic:
- Character 1: "This concludes my presentation. Are there any questions?"
- Character 2: "How do I get the boredom out of my head?!!"
- Character 3: "The funny thing is that I'll list this on my annual accomplishments. Air! I need air!!!"
Contact Details

Ian Bryant
Head of ITsafe Service

PO Box 832, London, SW1P 1BG, England

Telephone: +44-87-0114-4561; Direct - SmartNumber
Facsimile: +44-87-0114-4561; SmartNumber

Internet
head@itsafe.gov.uk
http://www.itsafe.gov.uk