

The Department of Justice (DOJ) Office of the Inspector General (OIG) announced the release today of a report on the Federal Bureau of Investigation's (FBI) Next Generation Cyber (Next Gen Cyber) Initiative to enhance its ability to address cybersecurity threats to the United States. The FBI's initiative was launched in 2012, shortly after a 2011 DOJ OIG report assessing the FBI's ability to address the cyber intrusion threat. The report released today finds that while the FBI has made considerable progress in achieving the goals established by the Next Gen Cyber Initiative, several challenges have prevented the FBI from fully meeting the initiative's objectives.

Specifically, the FBI has strengthened the National Cyber Investigative Joint Task Force (NCIJTF), which serves as a coordination, integration, and information sharing center among 19 U.S. agencies and international representatives for cyber threat information. This included increased international participation, a reorganization of the task force to eliminate perceived direct ties to the FBI's Cyber Division, and improved information sharing among participating agencies. The FBI also implemented new training to improve the awareness of all FBI employees, as well as the technical capabilities of those investigating cyber intrusion threats and incidents.

However, today's report also identifies several challenges facing the Next Gen Cyber Initiative. For example, we found that the FBI did not hire all the computer scientists it was authorized to hire, and some of the FBI's field offices did not have a computer scientist assigned to their local Cyber Task Forces. We found that recruiting highly qualified personnel has been difficult because the FBI's background investigation process is more onerous than those used by many private sector employers, and retention remains a concern because private sector entities can often pay higher salaries. We found that the FBI has had difficulty attracting external participants, particularly state and local law enforcement agencies, to its local Cyber Task Forces. We also found that although the FBI is working to enhance outreach to private sector entities, both the FBI and private sector representatives acknowledged to us that information sharing remains a challenge, in part because of private sector concerns about sharing sensitive information with the FBI.

The report released today makes eight recommendations to help the FBI achieve its goals for the Next Gen Cyber Initiative, including that the FBI develop a process to track and measure the timeliness of information sharing; continue to develop strategies to recruit, hire, and retain highly-skilled cyber professionals; and improve information sharing and collaboration with private sector entities. The FBI agreed with all eight recommendations.

Report: Today's report can be found on the OIG's website at the following link: <https://oig.justice.gov/reports/2015/a1529.pdf>.

Video: To accompany today's report, the OIG has released a 3-minute video featuring the Inspector General outlining the report's findings. Both the video and a downloadable transcript can be found on the OIG's website under "Recent Events" and at the following link: <https://oig.justice.gov/multimedia/>.