

Information security in public administration in Slovakia

—

do we take it seriously?

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Observation: (in previous years) an effort to improve information security visibility within the area of IS for Public Administration

Question: did information security really take the position it deserves or the effort missed its goals?

Cursory inspection – „YES“

- documents like the National strategy for information security, Action plan, Decree of the MF SR on standards for IS PA
- CSIRT.SK,
- even ITAPA conference (infosec used to be placed at the end of conference program, but not today!)

But let us take **more thorough look**, focusing **not on the mere existence** of such documents or actions, but also on **their other attributes like quality, attraction, suitability, etc.** using the key document - National strategy for information security („Strategy“) as an example.

Key players

- **security professionals,**
- **suppliers (of ICT products, or ICT related services),**
- **civil servants,**
- **decision makers, ...**

Security professionals

(coffee-break on a security related workshop ... after **B's** support for claim „there is no infosec community in Slovakia“)

A: WE ARE the community!

B: But then how it comes I do not know who are you?

A: I am the author of the **National strategy for information security!**

B: That tells me nothing...

Suppliers

- their role in security ignored by key documents
- **Conclusion: nothing changed for suppliers (tomorrow is going to be pretty the same as today)**

Decision makers

- their role in security ignored by key documents
- **Conclusion: nothing changed for decision makers (tomorrow is going to be pretty the same as today)**

Civil servants

(view from outside of PA)

„Strategy“ document is written in such a way that one has to wonder

- **how many of them ever read it and understood it?**
- **how many made an attempt to read it and gave up after a few pages?**
- **how many did not even try to read it?**
- **how many know there exists such document?**

The role of civil servants according to „Strategy“

**All the wisdom belong to the
designated center, for the rest (other
civil servants) no initiative is assumed,
apparently they are expected to just
blindly follow directives issued by the
center**

Did civil servants embrace „Strategy“?

Is there anyone who believe that civil servants whom the „Strategy“ placed into the passive, inferior role are motivated to adopt the document and lend support to its further development and enforcement?

Original goals of the effort?

- **Improving infosec position?**

Hardly successful without engagement of other players and it seems that authors did not bother to gain support from them

- **To come to power in this area?**

If yes, then partially successful (documents approved by the government).

Summary

- Do „Strategy“ and subsequent documents have some impact in real life?

Except the Decree on standards and its enforcement no visible impact.

Summary

- Did information security really take the position it deserves?

No attempt to change the attitude that information security is just an addendum was ever made („Strategy“ just reinforced such a view).