Presented By NeoSystems® & SNC®

Hiding in the Shadows

How Threats Exploit the Unprepared

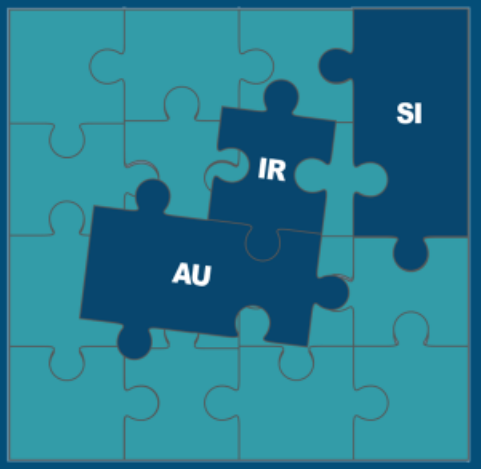
NeoSystems®

CMMC: Why We Do It, Episode 7

JUNE 5, 2025

CMMC: Why We Do It
Episode #7: Hiding in the Shadows

(How Threats Exploit the Unprepared)



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Shut the Front Door	Loose Lips Sink Ships	The K.I.S.S. Principle	All Together Now	Thinking Critically About Security	Rip the Band-Aid Off	Hiding in the Shadows	Working Hard or Hardly Working
How unauthorized access happens	*The role of user behavior in cyber attacks*	*How complexity & connectivity increase the probability and impact of a cyber incident*	*Exploiting the supply chain*	*You've already been hacked, or at least should act like it*	*Old security only leaks when it rains*	*How threats exploit the unprepared*	*How threat can tell the difference between real security versus fake security*

Our Speakers

Megin Kennett
NeoSystems

Ed Bassett
NeoSystems

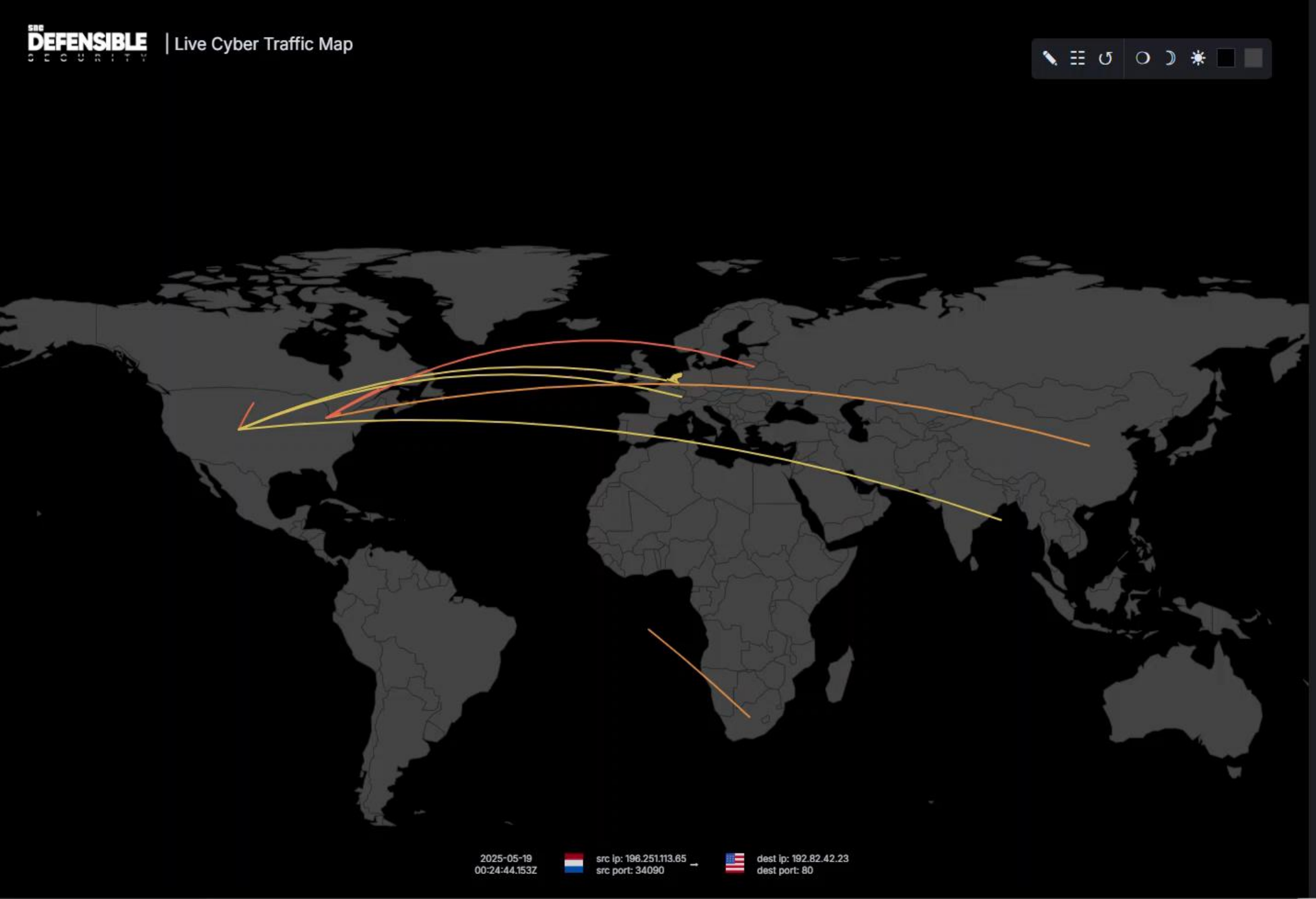
Robert Daugherty
SNC

Agenda

EPISODE 7:
Hiding in the Shadows

- The Threat Map
- The Modern Day Espionage
- The Detection Window is Shrinking
- Bad Actors Playbook
- Case Studies
- Best Practices for Prevention
- AI and Looking Forward
- Tying it Back to NIST 800-171

SNC DEFENSIBLE SECURITY | Live Cyber Traffic Map



TRAFFIC BLOCK REASONS

- Known Cyber Threat
- Country of Origin
- Unapproved Traffic Denied by Policy

BLOCKED ATTACKS THIS MONTH

17,936,686

TOP 5 ATTACKERS

The top countries attempting to breach our systems in the last month.

The Netherlands - 2,987,593 attempts	17%
China - 2,938,917 attempts	17%
Romania - 2,832,079 attempts	16%
Canada - 1,211,801 attempts	7%
United Kingdom - 1,020,993 attempts	5%

TOP 5 IPS ATTACKED

The top SNC internal IPs being targeted in the last month.

192.82.42.198 - 619,400 attempts	3%
192.82.42.74 - 371,099 attempts	2%
192.82.42.112 - 317,786 attempts	1%
192.82.42.115 - 302,679 attempts	1%
192.82.42.11 - 276,453 attempts	1%

TOP 5 PORTS ATTACKED

The top ports being targeted in the last month.

80 - 839,980 attempts	4%
23 - 781,135 attempts	4%
53 - 484,083 attempts	2%
8000 - 441,314 attempts	2%
443 - 435,063 attempts	2%

Federal Security Service (FSB)

Ministry Of State Security (MSS)






ADVERSARIAL MINDSET

A sophisticated, multidisciplinary long-game approach to compromising a U.S. national security system or weapons platform by a sophisticated nation-state adversary will involve a combination of cyber, human, technical, political, and economic strategies, deployed over *years* or even *decades*. Such a comprehensive strategy will involve several stages, aiming to penetrate, influence, degrade, or ultimately neutralize the targeted system.

The strategy will be slow and methodical, relying on persistence and long-term exploitation of systemic vulnerabilities, all while avoiding overt detection or retaliation. The goal will be to erode U.S. military superiority, disrupt decision-making, and create vulnerabilities that can be exploited in times of crisis or conflict.

Hacking is China's *preferred* mode of espionage, of which there are hundreds of examples from the past 10 years. But *hacking is not the only form of spying*. China uses traditional methods of agent recruitment (usually sex or money) as well as unconventional approaches, such as buying property next to a military or research facility and engaging direc[illegible]with [illegible]ers[illegible]s.

$600B

- **49% of incident directly inv[illegible] C[illegible]e [illegible]ilit[illegible] go[illegible]r[illegible]ent employees**
- **41% were private Chinese [illegible]ens**
- **10% were non-Chinese actors (usually U.S. persons recruited by Chinese officials)**
- ***46% of incidents involved cyber espionage, usually by State-affiliated actors***
- ***29% of incidents sought to acquire military technology***
- **54% of incidents sought to acquire commercial technologies**
- **17% of incidents sought to acquire information on U.S. civilian agencies or politicians.**

Detection Window is Shrinking

84
Minutes

51
Minutes

SECONDS

48
Minutes

Speed is survival.

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Days
External
Days

- ***Real-time threat detection*** *to identify and halt intrusions before they spread*
- ***Identity and access controls*** *to prevent adversaries from simply "logging in"*
- ***A counterintelligence mindset*** *– assume breach, proactively hunt for anomalous behaviors to block adversary movement*

The Bad Actor’s Playbook

1. Start with the Obvious: *Public info is Gold*
2. Find the Weakest Link: *Look for an open door*
3. Use People, Not Exploits: *Trick someone into letting you in (phishing, pretexting)*
4. Be Sneaky: *Stay quiet and avoid detection at all costs*
5. Create a Backdoor: *Establish a way to get back in whenever you want*
6. Live off the Land: *Use what's already there*
7. Go for the Crown: *Escalate privileges until you own the network*

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The Adversary's Advantage: Why Attackers Succeed

- Lack of visibility – not collecting activity logs
- Lack of detection – not able to discern bad behavior
- Checklist approach – security tools not used effectively
- Single layer security – trusting anything already inside the perimeter

Case Studies

SNC & Solarwinds: Rapid Detection & Response = Damage prevented

Unauthorized Change: A “Quick” change to an externally facing firewall led to a short window of vulnerability and over 9M brute force attempts by RU and CN

MSS Aerospace Industry Targeting

Image: Aerotime

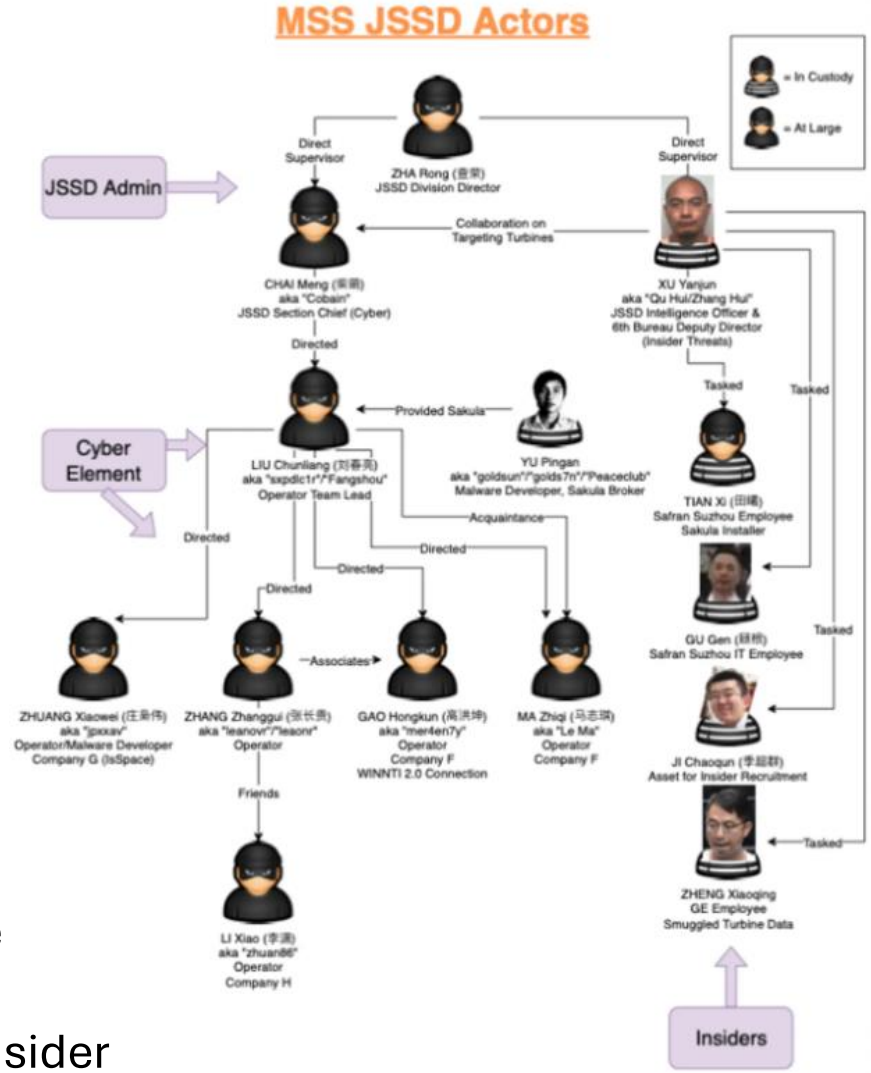


Image: Crowdstrike

- Direct competitor to Boeing and Airbus
- Development of China's COMAC C919 involved a lot of espionage
- Two teams of intel officers; one recruiting, one hacking
- Remote installation of malware, or delivered by USB through an insider
- Successful supply chain breaches – Honeywell, GE, Capstone Turbine, etc.

Best Practices for Prevention

- Real-time threat detection to identify and halt intrusions before they spread
- Identity and access controls to prevent adversaries from simply “logging in”
- A counterintelligence mindset – assume breach, proactively hunt for anomalous behaviors to block adversary movement
- Know Your Normal: Maintain a real-time inventory of assets and logs
- Establish alert thresholds and escalation workflows
- Run tabletop exercises
- Tune your controls—don’t just “set it and forget it”

AI and Looking Forward

Government Playbook

Requirements to address these risks:

- System and Information Integrity
- Audit and Accountability
- Incident Response

System and Information Integrity

- Fix flaws
- Stop malware
- Monitor alerts and take action
- Detect attacks
- Identify unauthorized use

Audit and Accountability

- Log system activity
- Know who did what when
- Protect logs
- Use logs for investigation and response

Incident Response

- Prepare, detect, analyze, contain, recover
- Track and report incidents
- Test incident response

Takeaway Summary

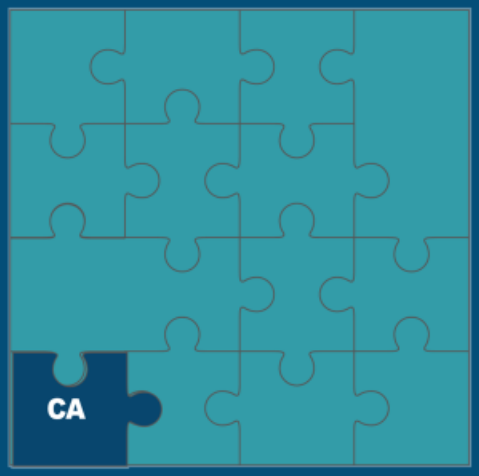
1. **Speed is Survival. Threat actors move fast.** Vulnerabilities are identified almost immediately by the adversary. Keeping your systems patched and your defenses dynamic and agile are foundational to preventing a breach.

2. **Visibility is key. Threat actors are quiet** and experts at evading detection. Having top-notch visibility with cross team and tool integration with automated alerting is key.

3. **AI and Automation. Threat actors** are already using AI, getting smarter and faster. Don’t let them stay ahead.

Episode #8: Working Hard or Hardly Working

(How threat can tell the difference between real security versus fake security)



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Questions?

Thank you.

Feel free to contact us:

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