

HISTORY OF THE AEROSPACE COMPUTER SECURITY CONFERENCE

The initial idea for a conference which would address issues regarding applications of computer security technology to aerospace programs came from conversations between Harry Sheetz and Fred Tompkins (employees of Mitre Corporation at the time) in July 1984. This idea was formally supported by Mitre, which became a co-sponsor of the first conference, along with NASA and the IEEE Computer Society. The first conference was held in March, 1985 at Mitre facilities in Virginia, attracted approximately 115 people to the one-day conference, and was acclaimed by all attendees. The chairman for that first Conference was Bill Bisignani, The Mitre Corporation.

Following the first conference, four of the organizers who were interested in establishing this event on a continuing basis formed a non-profit partnership, (now a corporation) named the Aerospace Computer Security Associates (ACSA), to achieve this end. The four Associates are Dr. Joel Levy currently at NASA Headquarters, Dr. Marshall Abrams of Mitre, Fred Tompkins now of CSC, and Bob Kovach now of PRC. We were all professional persons interested in the success of this fledgling venture and we proceeded with plans for a second conference to be held in December, 1986.

We agreed that Mitre, as a private company, should not be included as a sponsor. Further, there was little interest at NASA at that time for participation after the initial sponsorship agreement for the first conference. Early agreements to sponsor the second meeting were made with the Computer Society of the IEEE and the American Society for Industrial Security (ASIS). Later, agreements were reached with DODCI to provide the necessary sponsorship and support to permit classified sessions (all

sessions at the first conference were unclassified). It was strongly felt by the organizers that, despite the success of the first Conference, important progress could not be made without the addition of classified sessions.

Although there were initial discussions with AIAA to also act as a sponsor, these were proceeding casually until the Computer Society withdrew its sponsorship due to some confusion regarding their internal policies having to do with the sponsorship of classified meetings. At this point, discussions with the appropriate AIAA Technical Area Committee or TAC, proceeded more rapidly, and Lee Holcomb of NASA Headquarters, the Chairman of the relevant TAC, agreed to press for sponsorship. It was agreed by all parties that the Aerospace Computer Security Associates (ACSA) and its committee would provide arrangements for the meeting with liaison to the three sponsors.

We proceeded to enlist members of the organizing committee and were very fortunate in our efforts. We got Steve Walker to act as Program Chairman, and this was probably our biggest catch. Lewis Schneider of ASIS agreed to be Local Arrangements Chairman, another major catch since Lewis is a professional meeting planner and brought excellent credentials to the job. We also got Dr. Chris Perry as Tutorial Chairman, and Col. Vic Marshall at DDDCI agreed to act as liaison to that agency (after he was transferred, he was succeeded by Lt. Col. Jim McDaniel. Finally, Carl Landwehr of NRL and Terry Lozonsky of DoD's C²I Directorate agreed to help out.

As some of you know, the second Conference was held on December 2-4, 1986 at the Westpark Hotel, Vienna, Virginia, and was a great success. Over 190 persons attended the three day Conference. Classified sessions were held at a nearby Mitre facility and attracted over 100 people. The tutorials which were introduced proved very successful, with significant attendance at each. Comments received from attendees in a totally unsolicited way were very complementary. Dr. Joel Levy chaired this Conference and also agreed to chair the Conference in 1987.

On the heels of this heady prosperity, we began more ambitious planning for the Third Conference. We selected Orlando for a variety of reasons. First, because we felt a warmer climate might be more satisfying for our December meeting. Second, because ASIS had and continues to hold a number of successful meetings here. And third, because EPCOT Center and Disneyworld are great ancillary attractions for attendees' families.

We expanded the length of the Conference to four-and-a-half days, a format which we now feel quite comfortable with. The first two days consist of a variety of tutorial sessions, and these are followed by two-and-a-half days of technical panels and paper sessions.

We also changed our organizational sponsorship once again. The ACSA chose the IEEE as its major sponsor, with AIAA, ASIS, and the DODCI as well as ACSA being the sponsors. This same conglomerationalso was selected by ACSA to run the fourth meeting, also held in Orlando.

Certainly, in numbers alone, the Third Conference, held on December 2-5, 1987 was also a great success. Over 185 people attended the four-and-a-half day conference, which included classified sessions on one day. This number despite a terrible mix-up with our mailing of the Advance Program, which delayed by nearly a month the acquisition of program information by prospective attendees fully met our expectations. we agreed to meet again in 1988 in Orlando.

The concept of the Conference has matured to a point where acceptance of our role within the computer security field is being recognized. This role is centered about two primary objectives: first, to provide a forum at which issues regarding applications of computer security to planned programs and systems may be explored; and second, to provide educational experiences in computer security applications. Last year's conference had approximately 85 persons attend three tutorials on the first day, and approximately 185 people attended the classified and unclassified sessions during the next four days.

Planning for this year's meeting was then carried out during early 1988. Marshall Abrams has been General Chairman; Lewis Schneider, and Bob Kovach continued in their primary roles; Bill Bisignani returned to the scene and agreed to take on the position of Program Chairman; Dixie Baker of The Aerospace Corporation served as Tutorial Chairman; and Terry Rozonsky and Jim McDaniel stayed on as committee members; Joel Levy was the Finance Chairman. One major difference between this year's Conference and those of preceding ones is that classified meetings will not be held. The Department of Defense has installed new policies which make it impossible to hold classified meetings at a non-DoD conference.

The 1988 conference was a huge success. 261 people attended with over 185 people attending the tutorial sessions. Although the final numbers are not in, the three financial co-sponsors selected by ACSA (IEEE, ASIS, and ACSA) will certainly enjoy a large surplus. For our part all of the profits will be reinvested in future meetings. A survey conducted at the meeting got answers from about 15% of the attendees. All indications were that the technical program as well as the tutorials were very well received. The vast majority (nearly 90% indicated that they planned to attend next year's conference.

We are now apparently assured of having a successful Conference for the future. We therefore planned for 1989 and have selected a new site for the Conference. We'd like to formally invite all of you to join us at

the wonderful Westware Look Resort in Tucson, Arizona. Our meeting dates are set for December 4-8, and we promise to have some more interesting surprises for you in our total program.