

Chapter 4

Conclusion

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March 2009

This chapter should be cited as

Pibulyarajana, K. (2009), 'Conclusions', in Pibulyarajana, K. (ed.), *Strengthening Information Security in the Business Sector*. ERIA Research Project Report 2008-3-1, pp.100-102. Jakarta: ERIA.

IV. Conclusion

In this research, we studied the development of the common information security management benchmark (common ISM benchmark) in the Asian region.

First, we analyzed how the establishment of information security would impact the Asian economy or enterprise management in Asia and studied the role that the common ISM benchmark plays in the region. For this purpose, we pointed out that risk management involved with collaboration among companies is required in order to develop closer collaboration in the Asian region and to promote foreign direct investment (FDI). We showed that the establishment of information security management in the value chain was an essential element of this risk management. We also showed that the common ISM benchmark could support information security management in the value chain by providing a common method for companies to easily evaluate their information security levels in comparison with one another (III-1).

We then studied the conditions and challenges to enterprise information security measures in the Asian region. In addition, we conducted a survey on the trial use of the ISM benchmark in order to consider the needs and requirements for the Common ISM benchmark. Specifically, we asked several companies, who were ERIA WG members, excluding Japan, and who had created the ISM benchmark, to use the ISM benchmark and analyzed the results. We received answers from 48 companies in total in the member countries (six countries). Table 1 shows the breakdown of the answers.

Through trial use, the majority of the companies approved the ISM benchmark as an effective tool in evaluating the enterprise information security level; we generally obtained a positive result for the development of the common ISM benchmark. Meanwhile, we found that it was difficult to cover all cases with the ISM benchmark (III-2) alone.

Finally, WG achieved the following settlement after we considered our vision and goals based on these results (III-3):

Our Vision:

A common ISM benchmark contributes to industries and governments by building and promoting a trustworthy economic partnership that encourages more foreign direct investment (FDI) and business outsourcing in the Asian region.

Goals:

- The common ISM benchmark provides acceptable and comparable indicators of

the information security management level of organizations.

- As a comprehensive risk communication tool, the common ISM benchmark enables organizations to improve their sense of information security through visualization of the risks.

Some problems have yet to be resolved to establish the common ISM benchmark in the future. These problems are shown below:

(1) Positioning of the common ISM benchmark

- What type of company should be targeted (large or SMB)?
- Should only Asian countries or the entire world be targeted?

(2) Requirements for the common ISM benchmark

- To what extent should customization be permitted in each country?
- How should we support each language (localization)?
- Should several assessment criteria be established as opposed to only one assessment criterion?

(3) System under which the common ISM benchmark is established and operated

- How do we ensure human resources with the necessary expertise to establish the common ISM benchmark and a system that enables collaboration with other standards groups?
- Who manages data collected through the common ISM benchmark and systems, and who analyzes the data?
- How should we ensure compatibility and comparability among versions for different countries when permitting these countries to customize the benchmark?

These problems are difficult to resolve but taking the first step toward establishing information security management in the value chain is inevitable. In addition, consolidating the development of Asia requires constructing a more advanced cross-border common infrastructure suitable for a knowledge-based economy and appropriate for the knowledge-based economy era. As part of this effort, it is important

to place enterprise information security as a strategic policy in the region. From the perspective of establishing a new collaborative model in the Asian region, it is important for Asia, which has an important role in the world economy, to take the initiative in developing this common ISM benchmark.

This policy research is the first trial led by the Asian region as well as for the ERIA. However, we think we have successfully obtained substantial results from this policy research. It is important to continue efforts towards the realization of a common information security infrastructure in Asia based on the results of this research for the development of the region.