



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

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VITA RECEIVES NATIONAL CYBERSECURITY AWARD

– VDOT IT program nets honorable mention –

RICHMOND – The Virginia Information Technologies Agency (VITA) has received the National Association of State Chief Information Officers (NASCIO) 2014 Recognition Award for Outstanding Achievement in the Field of Information Technology for cybersecurity.

VITA’s “Barring Open Doors to Threats” project was named best in the nation in the cybersecurity category.

“VITA’s security team and state agency information technology (IT) security officials who worked with the team deserve significant recognition for their diligent work to protect our citizens from cyber criminals,” said Virginia Chief Information Officer (CIO) Sam Nixon, who also serves as VITA’s agency head. “Virginia’s approach to cybersecurity across all state agencies permitted the security team to observe threats, implement targeted strategies and make our networks more secure. This recognition is hard earned.”

“We are dedicated to protecting our citizens and businesses as they interact with government,” Nixon added. “We also are committed to providing a business climate to allow private industry cybersecurity initiatives to thrive in the commonwealth.”

Beginning in January 2013, VITA implemented a full-scale threat analysis of the state’s cyber attack data to examine an increasing trend in successful malicious attacks. The team identified two significant threat vectors – first, local administrative rights (LAR) that permit the state employee computer user to download software and, secondly, patching for Java software. VITA took action and reduced LAR from 73,519 users to 10,922 – a reduction of 62,597, or 85 percent, by December 2013. Additionally, approximately 35,000 instances of Java on employee computers were updated to an acceptable level of patching.

These actions decreased the frequency of security incidents. Malware incidents, where software is used by cyber criminals to disrupt computer operations, steal sensitive information or access computers, were reduced to the lowest level recorded by the commonwealth since the

consolidation of executive branch IT services. There was a 54 percent reduction in security incidents between the six months prior to the project and six months after its completion.

The Virginia Department of Transportation's "OutsideVDOT" received an honorable mention in NASCIO's improving state operations category. VDOT's program used collaboration software to permit VDOT staff and contractors handling projects to share documents and maintain up-to-date versions instead of sending the documents back-and-forth via email.

In presenting the awards, NASCIO officials noted, "Successful information technology initiatives in state government deserve to be highlighted and shared in order to promote innovation, foster better government, and engage citizens."

Full details on Virginia's programs may be found on the NASCIO's website:

[Barring Open Doors to Threats](#)
[OutsideVDOT](#)

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About the Virginia Information Technologies Agency (VITA)

VITA is the commonwealth's consolidated technology services and solutions provider responsible for the operation of the state's technology infrastructure, governance, security and oversight of major IT projects, and procurement of technology-related goods and services on behalf of state and local governments.

www.vita.virginia.gov