Australian cyber security leaders join forces to build sustainable career pathways for industry professionals

Australia's first cyber security professionalisation program leverages human-centred design methodology and a co-design framework to establish world-leading career pathways for cyber security professionals

SYDNEY, Australia, 29 March 2023 — AustCyber, Australia's cyber security growth network, is orchestrating an industry co-design team including cyber security experts, universities and industry associations, to create the Australian Cyber Security Professionalisation Program (ACSP).

The ACSP represents a critical step towards professionalising Australia's cyber security industry to meet global standards whilst sustainably developing the local cyber security ecosystem. Once finalised, the implementation of the ACSP will help standardise and repair Australia's cyber security industry which is currently fragmented with no clear career pathway for growth and development.

The ACSP co-design team features some of Australia's leading cyber security professionals including University of South Australia SmartSat CRC Chair of Cybersecurity, Jill Slay, KordaMentha Executive Director, Tony Vizza, and AustCyber Group Executive, Jason Murrell. Each member will assist in the design and development of the ACSP to ultimately build solutions that improve government, business and community trust and confidence in Australian cyber security professionals.

"This is the first time all major industry players have come together to get an actionable plan in place for Australia's growing cyber security industry," **said KordaMentha Executive Director, Tony Vizza.** "The overall cyber security landscape is going to get worse before it gets better, with the scale of risk and vulnerability rising in tandem with our online existence. We need to not only increase the number of Australians entering the sector to help secure our digital presence but ensure employees graduating from the tertiary system are equipped with the skills and capabilities required as a working cyber security professional."

Over recent months, the ACSP co-design team has been conducting extensive qualitative research to understand the current customer experience and determine existing gaps in the local cyber security ecosystem. This includes extensive engagements with key stakeholders, employers and employees to discern what critical elements of career and industry professionalism should be represented in the first ACSP edition. The program will then undergo extensive optimisation testing to ensure Australia meets international cyber security standards.

"We've never defined what a cyber security professional is in Australia, and it's incredibly important that we get the basics of the profession down," **said Jill Slay.** "The degree of ambiguity around what a cyber security employee is and should be capable of in terms of skill set is a major problem for businesses, defence and cyber policing in this country. Cyber security is an extremely fast-moving sector with attackers rapidly evolving and moving ahead of existing protection systems. We need to become smarter in the way we approach our cyber security processes and evolve with threat actors by accrediting the local cyber security workforce as their skills update in line with shifting environmental conditions."

By establishing the role of cyber security professionals and defining career and education pathways through an accredited program, the ACSP will increase professional recognition, and bring consistency to the definition of cyber security roles in Australia. The shared understanding of critical skills, knowledge and experience that constitute a cyber security professional amongst employers and employees will ultimately result in a safer, more cyber-secure business environment and an increased trust and confidence for both the employer and employee in the industry.

AustCyber Group Executive Jason Murrell said, "Our goal with the ACSP is to be in the top five within the next decade. Cyber security is one of the most important industries for us to strengthen, and the fact we haven't had a clear pathway for professional growth and development in Australia, has left us extremely vulnerable. We as a collective want to give members of the cyber security industry both locally and abroad a clear pathway of standards to work towards."

The ACSP co-design team:

- Professor Jill Slay, (ISC)^2, Vice Chairperson of the Board
- Tony Vizza, KordaMentha, Executive Director Cybersecurity
- Professor Matt Warren, RMIT University, Centre for Cyber Security Research & Innovation Director
- Jo-Stewart Rattray, ISACA, Former Global Board Director, Oceania Regional Ambassador
- Rupert Grayston, Australian Computer Society (ACS), Director Capability
- Damien Manuel, Australian Information Security Association (AISA), Chairperson
- Jo Cave, TAFEcyber, General Manager
- Rachel Bailes, Australian Information Industry Association (AIIA), Head of Policy
- Scarlett McDermott, Tech Council of Australia, Head of Ecosystem Capability
- Kathleen Moorby, AustCyber, Director Programs

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About AustCyber

AustCyber's mission is to support the development of a vibrant and globally competitive Australian cyber security sector. In doing so, we will enhance Australia's future economic growth in a digitally enabled global economy. AustCyber exists to grow Australia's cyber security ecosystem, export our cyber security to the world, and make Australia the leading centre for cyber-education.

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