4. SPI-NOTES, for discussion of problems and solutions regarding the use of SPI products.

Our mailing lists are managed by a public domain software package called ListProcessor, which ignores E-mail header subject lines. To subscribe (add yourself) to one of our mailing lists, send requests of the following form:

subscribe *list-name LastName, FirstName PhoneNumber*

as the E-mail message body, substituting CIAC-BULLETIN, CIAC-NOTES, SPI-ANNOUNCE or SPI-NOTES for *list-name* and valid information for *LastName FirstName* and *PhoneNumber*. Send to: ciac-listproc@llnl.gov not to: ciac@llnl.gov

e.g.,

subscribe ciac-notes O'Hara, Scarlett W. 404-555-1212 x36
subscribe ciac-bulletin O'Hara, Scarlett W. 404-555-1212 x36

You will receive an acknowledgment containing address, initial PIN, and information on how to change either of them, cancel your subscription, or get help. To subscribe an address which is a distribution list, first subscribe the person responsible for your distribution list. You will receive an acknowledgment (as described above). Change the address to the distribution list by sending a second E-mail request. As the body of this message, send the following request, substituting valid information for *list-name*, *PIN,* and *address of the distribution list*:. Send

E-mail to `ciac-listproc@llnl.gov`:

`set` *`list-name`* `address` *`PIN`* *`distribution_list_address`*

e.g., `set ciac-notes address 001860 remailer@tara.georgia.orb`

To be removed from this mailing list, send the following request:

unsubscribe *list-name*

For more information, send the following request:

help

If you have any questions about this list, you may contact the list's owner: listmanager@cheetah.llnl.gov.

This document was prepared as an account of work sponsored by an agency of the United States Government. Neither the United States Government nor the University of California nor any of their employees, makes any warranty, express or implied, or assumes any legal liability or responsibility for the accuracy, completeness, or usefulness of any information, apparatus, product, or process disclosed, or represents that its use would not infringe privately owned rights. Reference herein to any specific commercial products, process, or service by trade name, trademark, manufacturer, or otherwise, does not necessarily constitute or imply its endorsement, recommendation or favoring by the United States Government or the University of California. The views and opinions of authors expressed herein do not necessarily state or reflect those of the United States Government or the University of California, and shall not be used for advertising or product endorsement purposes.

End of CIAC Notes Number 94-04c 94_12_08

As of this date, there are no known viruses which can infect merely through reading a mail message. For a virus to spread some program must be executed. Reading a mail message does not execute the mail message. Yes, Trojans have been found as executable attachments to mail messages, the most notorious being the IBM VM Christmas Card Trojan of 1987, also the TERM MODULE Worm (reference CIAC Bulletin B-7) and the GAME2 MODULE Worm (CIAC Bulletin B-12). But this is not the case for this particular "virus" alert.

If you encounter this message being distributed on any mailing lists, simply ignore it or send a follow-up message stating that this is a false rumor.

Karyn Pichnarczyk
CIAC Team
ciac@llnl.gov

Who is CIAC?

CIAC is the U.S. Department of Energy's Computer Incident Advisory Capability. Established in 1989, shortly after the Internet Worm, CIAC provides various computer security services free of charge to employees and contractors of the DOE, such as:

- Incident Handling consulting
- Computer Security Information
- On-site Workshops
- White-hat Audits

CIAC is located at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory and is a part of its Computer Security Technology Center. CIAC is also a founding member of FIRST, the Forum of Incident Response and Security Teams, a global organization established to foster cooperation and coordination among computer security teams worldwide

Contacting CIAC

If you require additional assistance or wish to report a vulnerability, call CIAC at 510-422-8193, fax messages to 510-423-8002 or send E-mail to ciac@llnl.gov.

> For emergencies and off-hour assistance, CIAC is available 24-hours a day to DOE and DOE contractors via an integrated viocemail and SKYPAGE number. To use this service, dial 1-510-422-8193 or 1-800-759-7243 (SKYPAGE). The primary PIN number, 8550070 is for the CIAC duty person. A second PIN, 8550074 is for the CIAC Project Leader. Please keep these numbers handy.

CIAC's Electronic Publications

Previous CIAC Bulletins and other information are available via anonymous FTP from ciac.llnl.gov.

CIAC has several self-subscribing mailing lists for electronic publications:
1. CIAC-BULLETIN for Advisories, highest priority - time critical information and Bulletins, important computer security information;
2. CIAC-NOTES for Notes, a collection of computer security articles;
3. SPI-ANNOUNCE for official news about Security Profile Inspector (SPI) software updates, new features, distribution and availability;

U.S. DOE's Computer Incident Advisory Capability

CIAC NOTES

Number 94-04c December 8, 1994

Welcome to the fourth issue of CIAC Notes! This is a special edition to clear up recent reports of a "good times" virus-hoax. Let us know if you have topics you would like addressed or have feedback on what is useful and what is not. Please contact the editor, Allan L. Van Lehn, CIAC, 510-422-8193 or send E-mail to ciac@llnl.gov.

Reference to any specific commercial product does not necessarily constitute or imply its endorsement, recommendation or favoring by CIAC, the University of California, the U. S. Department of Energy, or the United States Government.

"Good Times" virus is an Urban Legend

In the early part of December, CIAC started to receive information requests about a supposed "virus" which could be contracted via America OnLine, simply by reading a message. The following is the message that CIAC received:

> Here is some important information. Beware of a file called Goodtimes.
>
> Happy Chanukah everyone, and be careful out there. There is a virus on America Online being sent by E-Mail. If you get anything called "Good Times", DON'T read it or download it. It is a virus that will erase your hard drive. Forward this to all your friends. It may help them a lot.

THIS IS A HOAX. Upon investigation, CIAC has determined that this message originated from both a user of America Online and a student at a university at approximately the same time, and it was meant to be a hoax.

CIAC has also seen other variations of this hoax, the main one is that any electronic mail message with the subject line of "xxx-1" will infect your computer.

This rumor has been spreading very widely. This spread is due mainly to the fact that many people have seen a message with "Good Times" in the header. They delete the message without reading it, thus believing that they have saved themselves from being attacked. These first-hand reports give a false sense of credibility to the alert message.

There has been one confirmation of a person who received a message with "xxx-1" in the header, but an empty message body. Then, (in a panic, because he had heard the alert), he checked his PC for viruses (the first time he checked his machine in months) and found a pre-existing virus on his machine. He incorrectly came to the conclusion that the E-mail message gave him the virus (this particular virus could NOT POSSIBLY have spread via an E-mail message). This person then spread his alert.