

**Complex Systems & Security Laboratory**

[www.coseritylab.it](http://www.coseritylab.it)



**Ministero delle imprese  
e del made in Italy**

**Scuola Superiore di  
Specializzazione in  
Telecomunicazioni  
Sicurezza**



# **Cybersecurity delle Operational Technologies (OT): minacce e contromisure**

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**Università Campus Bio-Medico di Roma**

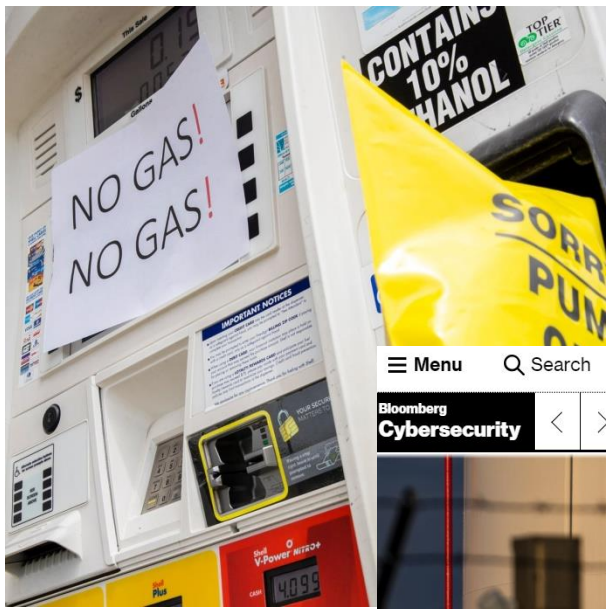
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Photographer: Samuel Corum/Bloomberg

Cybersecurity

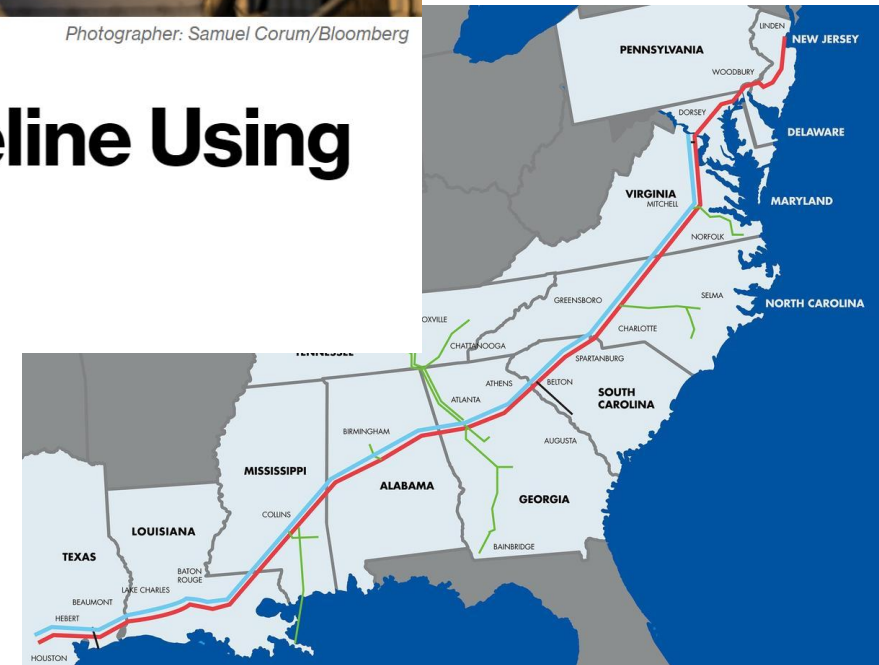
# Hackers Breached Colonial Pipeline Using Compromised Password

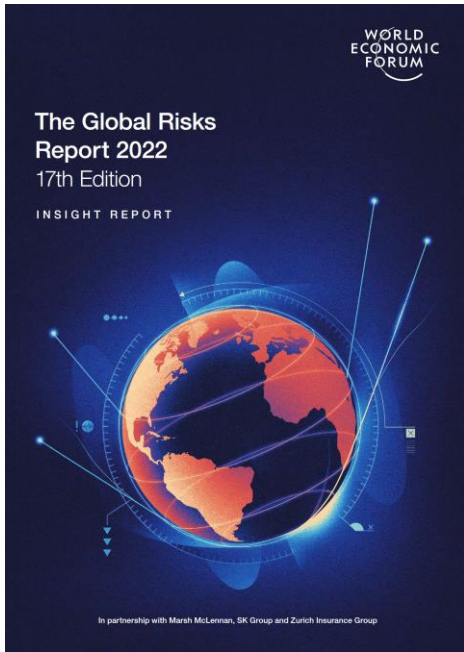
By [William Turton](#) and [Kartikay Mehrotra](#)

4 giugno 2021, 21:58 CEST



20/04/2023



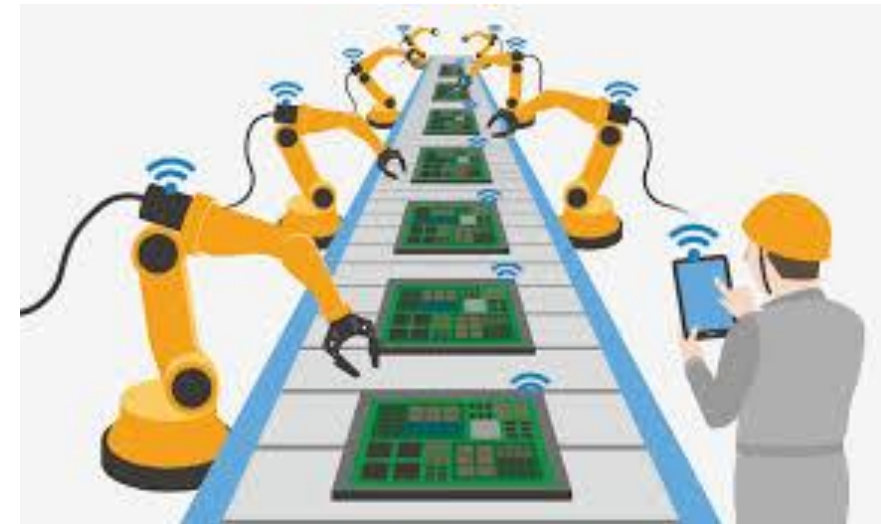
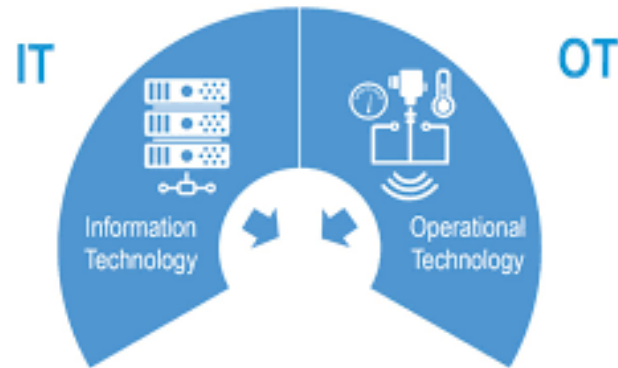


*“Attacks on large and strategic systems will carry cascading physical consequences across societies, while prevention will inevitably entail higher costs”.*

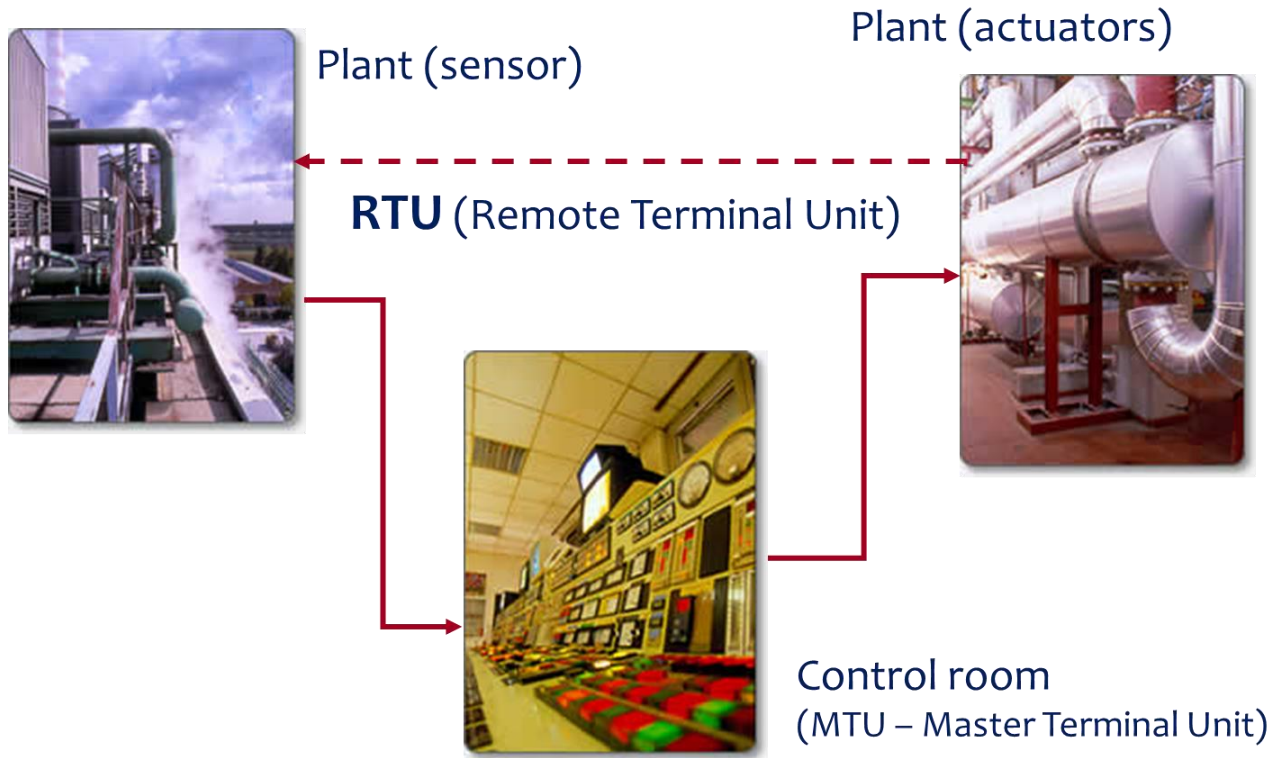
L'evoluzione dei sistemi **ICS/SCADA** e il progressivo aumento delle possibilità di gestione e controllo in remoto delle attività produttive esporrà, verosimilmente, il settore manifatturiero al rischio di crescenti compromissioni cyber, finalizzate ad alterare i dati operativi di processo, con potenziali impatti di ordine non solo economico ma anche **cinetico**.



# Operational Technology



# Industrial Control System



# Tassonomia dei sistemi OT



**SCADA**



**DCS**



**PLC**



**Micro-controller**



**IIoT**



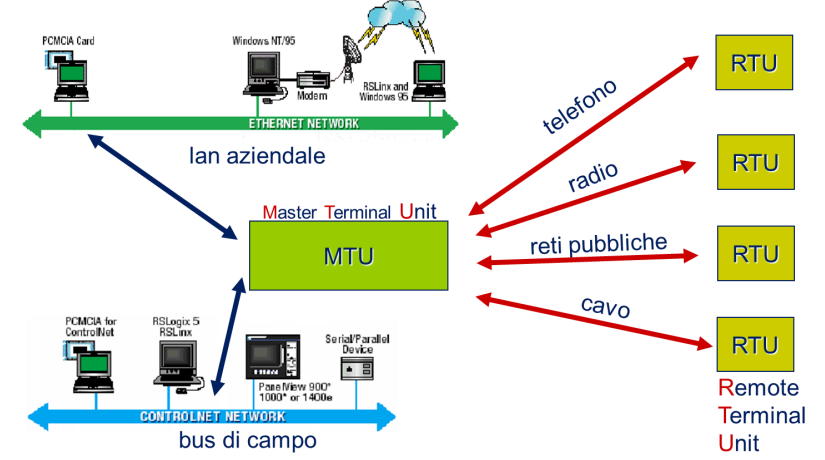
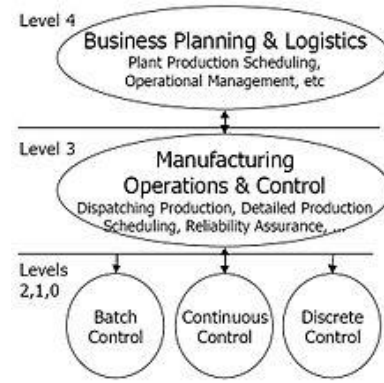
**Smart meter**



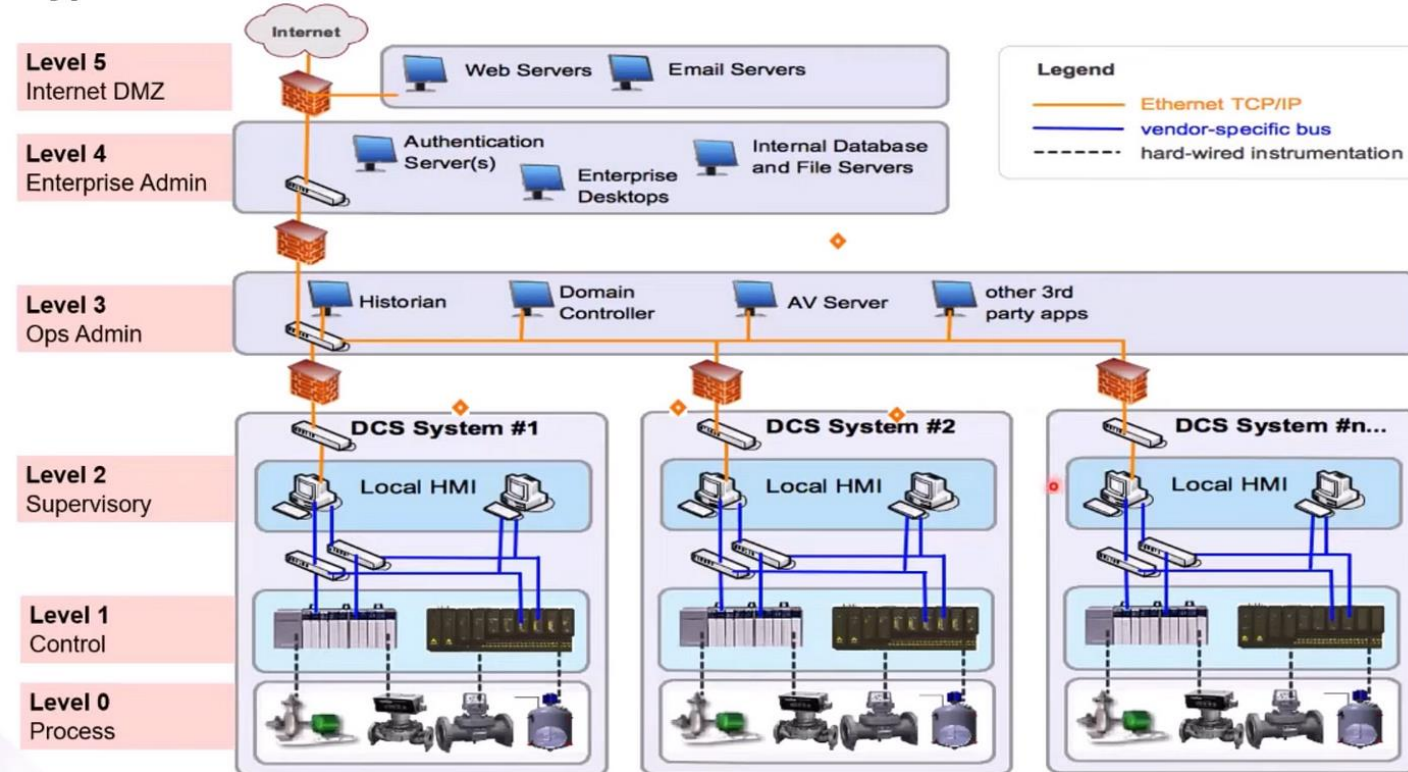
**Computerized Numerical Control**



# Purdue Model



## Typical Industrial Network Architecture: Purdue Model



22/08/00

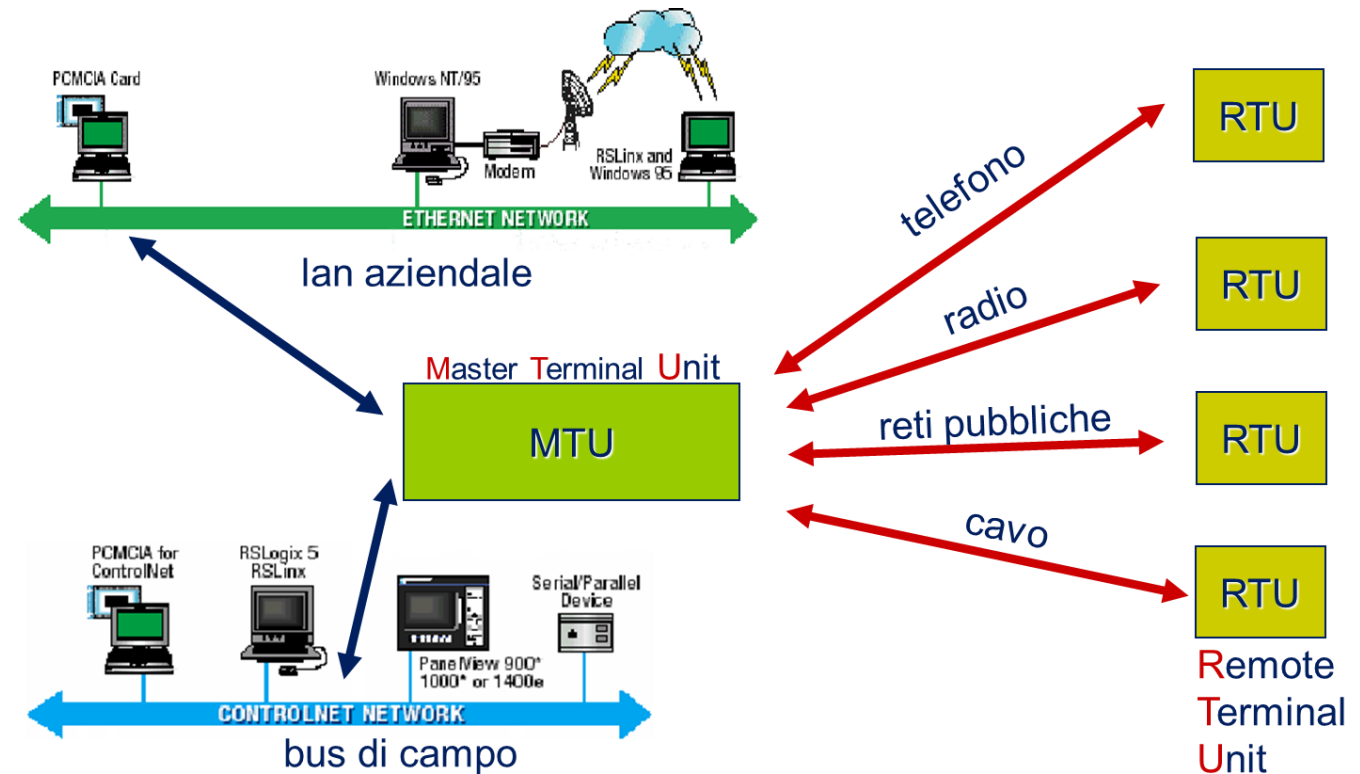
# Operational Technologies

Fino alla fine degli anni '90, i sistemi OT erano essenzialmente isolati dalla rete IT aziendale, utilizzavano ambienti e protocolli proprietari e scambiavano informazioni su reti dedicate.

Oggi utilizzano software e protocolli off-the-shelf, sono integrati con le reti IT e fanno ampio uso di dispositivi mobili e IIoT (Industrial Internet of Thing).

Ciò espone i sistemi OT alle stesse classi di minacce dei sistemi IT.

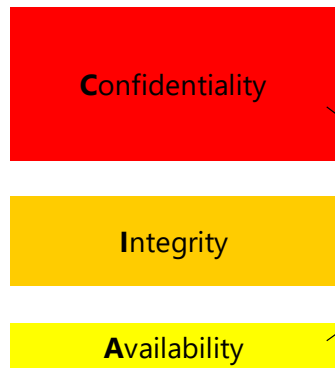
Le peculiarità dei sistemi OT non rendono disponibili tutti gli strumenti di contrasto per l'IT



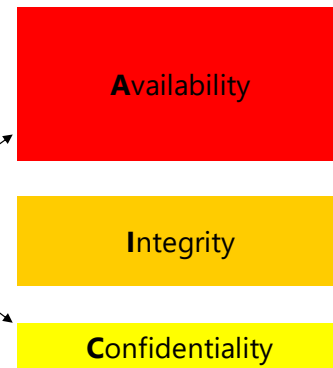


# IT vs OT Cyber security priorities

## General purpose IT Systems



## Industrial Automation & Control Systems



Priority

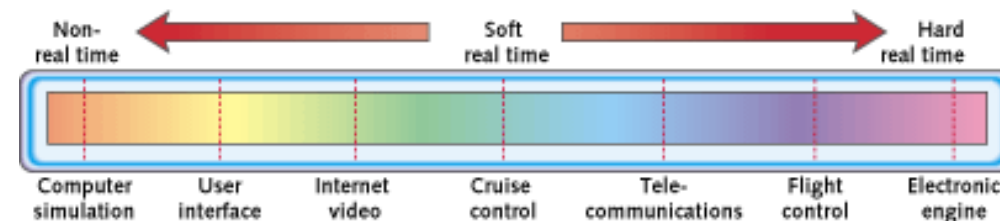
Source: ANSI/ISA-99.00.01-2007  
Security for Industrial Automation and Control Systems

Availability is a crucial requirement

I sistemi OT presentano diverse peculiarità:

- Sono caratterizzati da un gran numero di connessioni di I/O
- Molti messaggi di **pochi byte** (il loro numero aumenta nel caso di situazioni anomale)
- Operano **24/7/365** all'anno
- Hanno dei **lifetime** di 10 – 20 anni
- Hanno bisogno di requisiti di **Hard real-time** (vs soft real time)

Figure 1: The real-time spectrum



# Conseguenze di un attacco cyber

Un attacco cyber a un sistema OT può produrre:

- Danni fisici/distruzione delle apparecchiature
- Potenziali impatti sulla salute dei lavoratori/popolazione
- Problemi di inquinamento
- Effetti a cascata su altre infrastrutture/sistemi
- Lunghi tempi di recupero



# Intentional or «accidental» sabotage

Un cyber attack compromette il normale funzionamento del sistema. Ciò può avvenire in due modi diversi.

- L'azione cyber è tale da interferire con il funzionamento del sistema OT rallentando le comunicazioni, cancellando i file di configurazione, rendendo inaccessibili alcune risorse, ecc. Eventi che inducono il sistema a porsi (automaticamente) in una condizione di sicurezza bloccando l'erogazione del servizio.
- L'azione cyber "costringe" il processo a operare in condizioni diverse da quelle nominali, inducendo un comportamento che altera il modo in cui il sistema è progettato per funzionare.



«accidental»  
sabotage

«intentional»  
sabotage



## 2000 – Maroochy Shire

### Source

An ex-employer used a wireless Internet connection to penetrate into SCADA of sewage treatment plant



### Consequences

- 47 “abnormal” accidents in January-April 2000
- 1.200.000 liters of raw sewage dispersed in the environment
- Potable water compromised in the area



## How did he do it?

- On April 23, 2000 Vitek was arrested with stolen radio equipment, controller programming software on a laptop and a fully operational controller. Vitek is now in jail...

Disgruntled Contractor



## Hacker jailed for revenge sewage attacks

### Job rejection caused a bit of a stink

By [Tony Smith](#) 31 Oct 2001 at 15:55

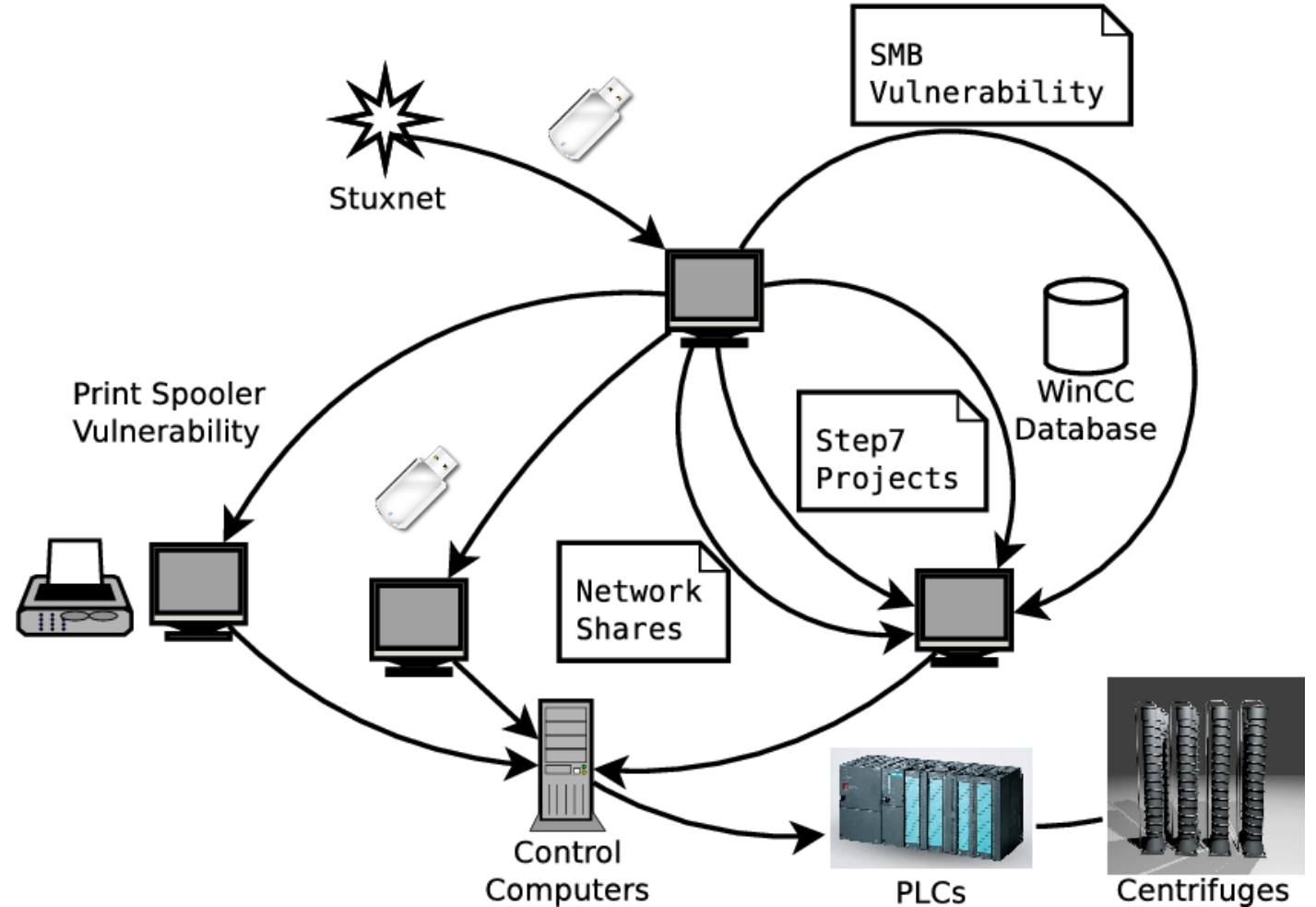
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An Australian man was today sent to prison for two years after he was found guilty of hacking into the Maroochy Shire, Queensland computerised waste management system and caused millions of litres of raw sewage to spill out into local parks, rivers and even the grounds of a Hyatt Regency hotel.

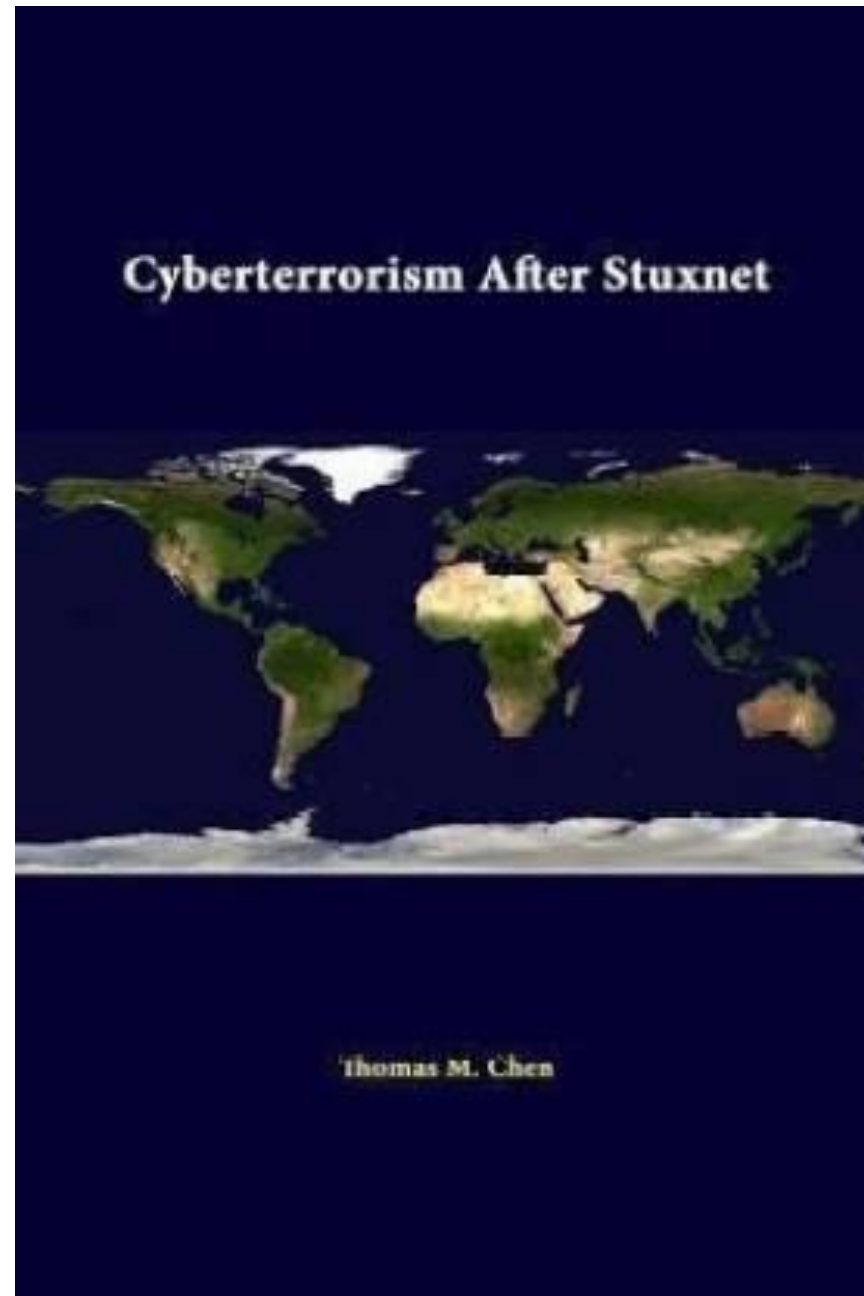


# 2010 - La svolta !

## Da potenziale minaccia a rischio effettivo



# After Stuxnet



# Alcuni episodi

**IRONGATE**

(2014)

**Dragonfly/HAVEX**

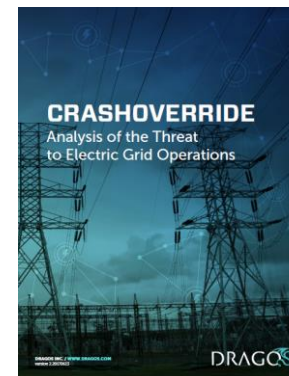
(2016)

**BLACKENERGY 2**

(2014)

**CrashOverride**

(2016)

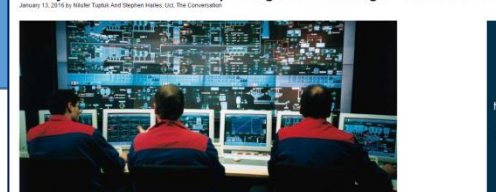


*“external interference from the computer network”  
Ukrenergo*

**BLACKENERGY 3**

(2015)

The cyberattack on Ukraine's power grid is a warning of what's to come



**TRITON**

(2017)

Target: Safety Instrumented System (**SIS**) controllers

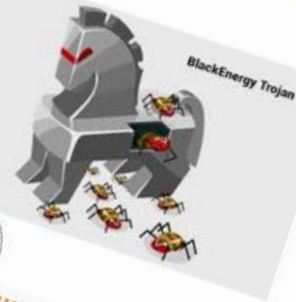
# Ukrainian black-out 2015



The cyberattack on Ukraine's power grid is a warning of what's to come  
 January 13, 2016 by Krul' Topak And Stepen Hales, U.S. The Conversation



On December 23, 2015 100,000 people in and around the Ukrainian city of Ivano-Frankivsk were left without power for six hours. Power companies experienced unscheduled power outages. In addition, there have also been reports of malware found in Ukrainian companies in a variety of critical infrastructure sectors.



## Alert (ICS-ALERT-14-281-0) Ongoing Sophisticated Malware Campaign Compromising ICS (Update)

- ICS-CERT has identified a sophisticated malware campaign that has compromised numerous industrial control systems (ICSs) environments using a variant of the BlackEnergy malware. Analysis indicates that this campaign has been ongoing since at least 2011. Multiple companies working with ICS-CERT have identified the malware on Internet-connected human-machine interfaces (HMIs).
- ICS-CERT has not been able to verify if the intruders expanded access beyond the compromised HMI into the remainder of the underlying control system. The malware is highly modular and not all functionality is deployed to all victims.



20/04/2025

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Phishing E-mails

BlackEnergy 3

VPN & Credential Theft

Network & Host Discovery



Malicious Firmware Development

SCADA Hijack (HMI/Client)



Breaker Open Commands



UPS Modification  
 Firmware Upload  
 KillDisk Overwrites

Power Outage(s)





# 2016 Industroyer (ESET) o CRASHOVERRIDE (Dragos)

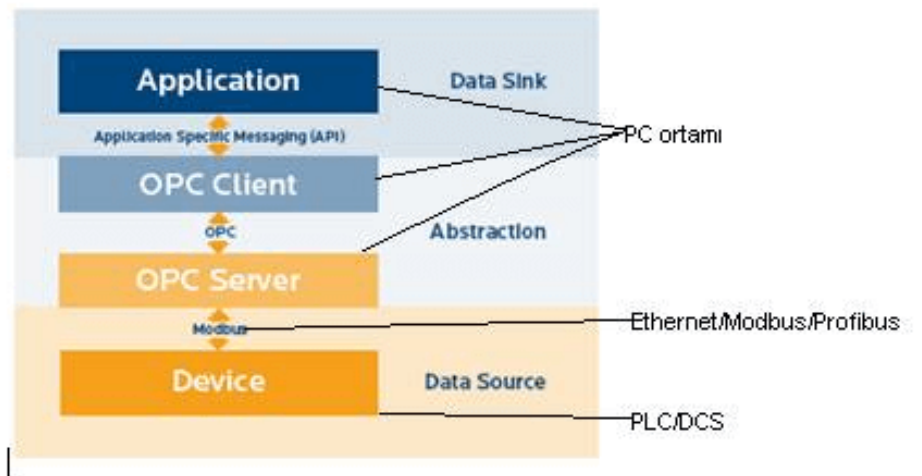
- It does not exploit vulnerabilities or 0-days
- It leveraged the OPC protocol to help it map the environment and select its targets.
- It targeted the libraries and configuration files of HMIs to understand the environment further and leveraged HMIs
- It is a platform to conduct attacks against grid operations systems in various environments and not confined to work only on specific vendor platforms (even if it contains specific elements to attack and destroy ABB components)

«interferenza esterna proveniente dalla rete informatica» Ukrenergo

17 dicembre 2016 black out di 1 ora che ha interessato il territorio Ucraino



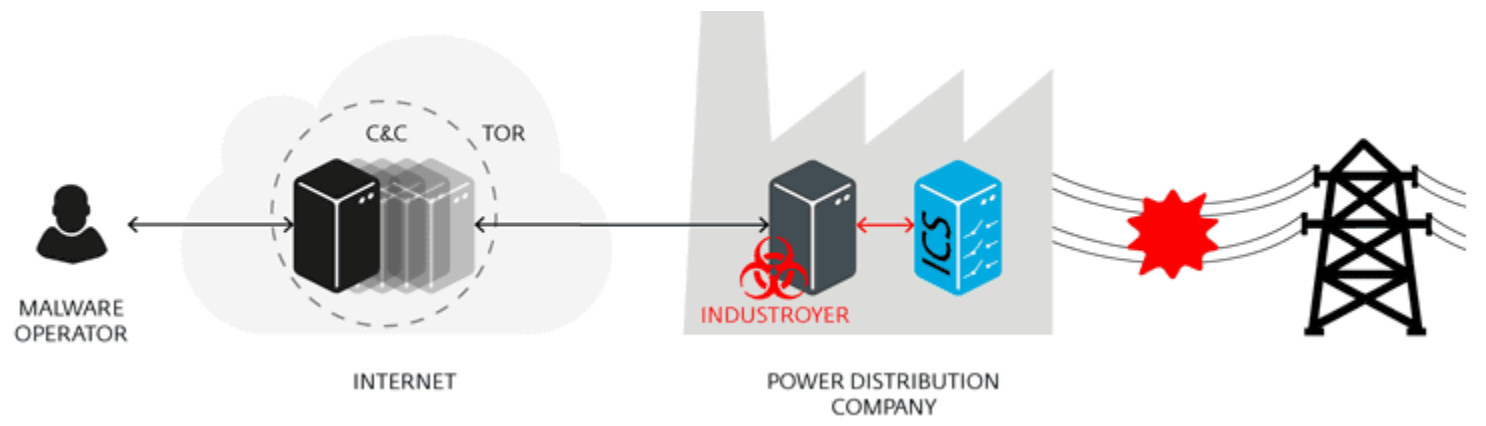
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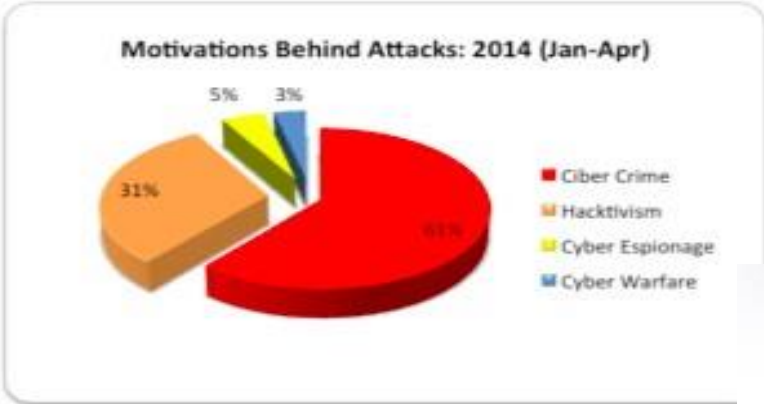


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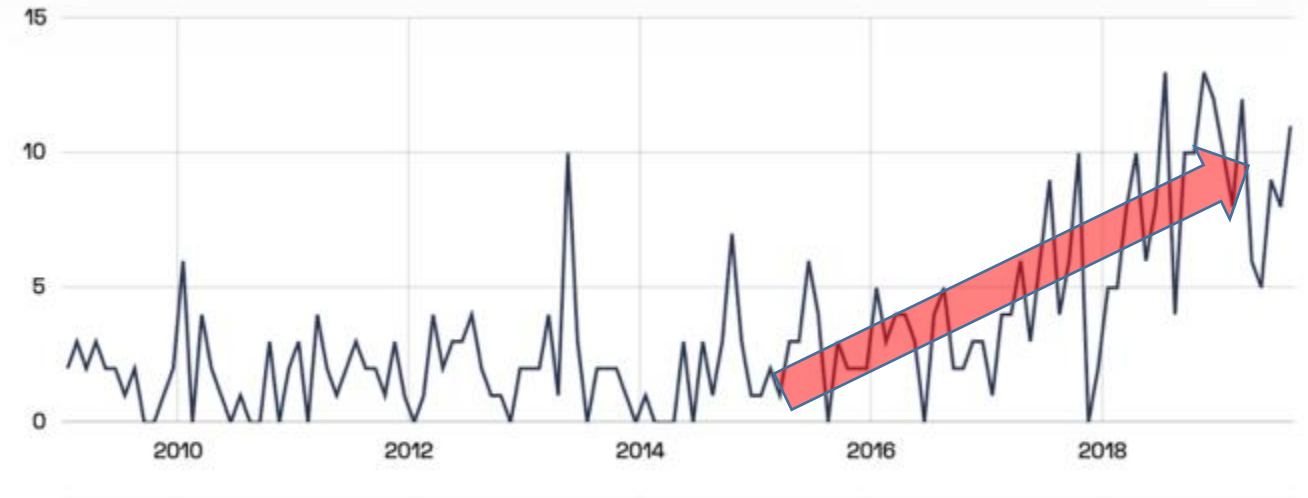
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“World governments are investing more and more capital on both offense and defense-related cyber tools, tactics, and strategies”

Geopolitical cyber attacks 2009 - 2019



<https://www.fintechnews.org/is-cyberwarfare-as-threatening/>



## ICS CVE Severity Stacked 2020-2022



ICS/OT

# Siemens Drives Rise in ICS Vulnerabilities Discovered in 2022: Report

More than 1,300 ICS vulnerabilities were discovered in 2022, including nearly 1,000 that have a high or critical severity rating.

<https://www.securityweek.com/siemens-drives-rise-in-ics-vulnerabilities-discovered-in-2022-report/>

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# FINANCIAL TIMES

## Israel-Iran attacks: 'Cyber winter is coming'

Suspected online assaults on water plant and port offer clues to next stage of rivalry



Two Israeli officials said striking at Iranian civilian infrastructure was an escalation taken at the behest of the acting defence minister, who wanted a visible response to a suspected attack on Israel's water station



Illustrative: A worker at the Eshkol Water Filtration Plant in Northern Israel, operated by Israel's National Water Company Mekorot (photo credit: Moshe Shai/Flash90)



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www.



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## Hackers attack train network to stop Putin moving troops from Russia to Ukraine

The hackers stopped trains in Minsk, Orsha, and Osipovichi by encrypting some systems, making it impossible to buy tickets



The hacker group Anonymous has waged a cyber war against Russia.

<https://theconversation.com/the-hacker-group-anonymous-has-waged-a-cyber-war-against-russia-how-effective-could-they-actually-be-178034>

## Ukrainian cyber resistance group targets Russian power grid, railways

By Joel Schectman, Christopher Bing and James Pearson

SUBJECT MATTER AREAS CYBERSECURITY INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

## Anonymous Claims Hacks on More Than 300 Russian Cyber Targets in 48 Hours, Including Gas Control System

Hackers claimed breach of defense manufacturer Tetraedr, obtaining more than 200 pieces of data, including the company's internal network and potentially leaking the data.



# Strategie di difesa

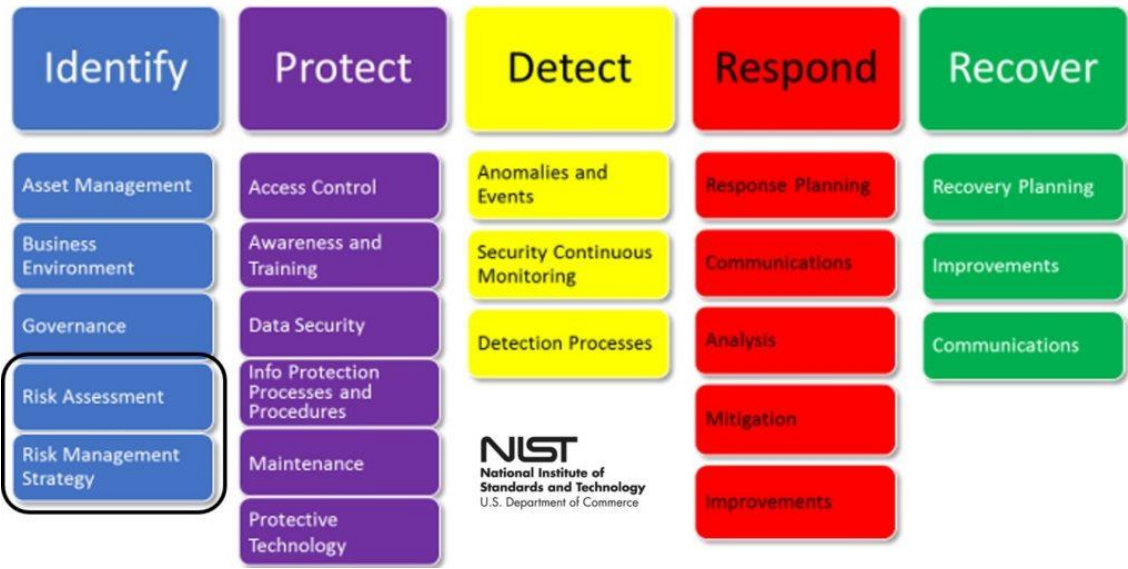


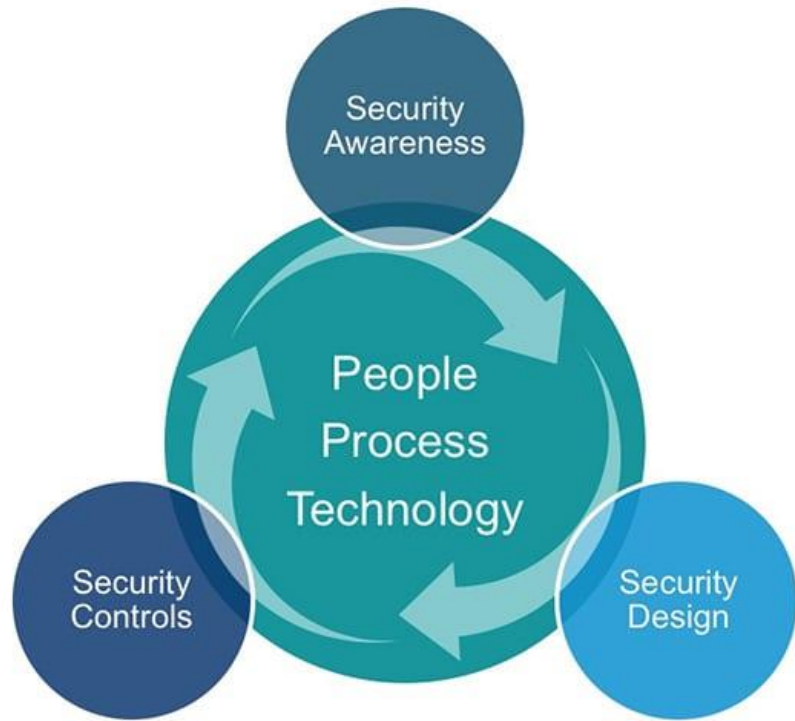
# Framework Nazionale per la Cybersecurity e la Data Protection

Febbraio 2019



## NIST Cyber Security Framework



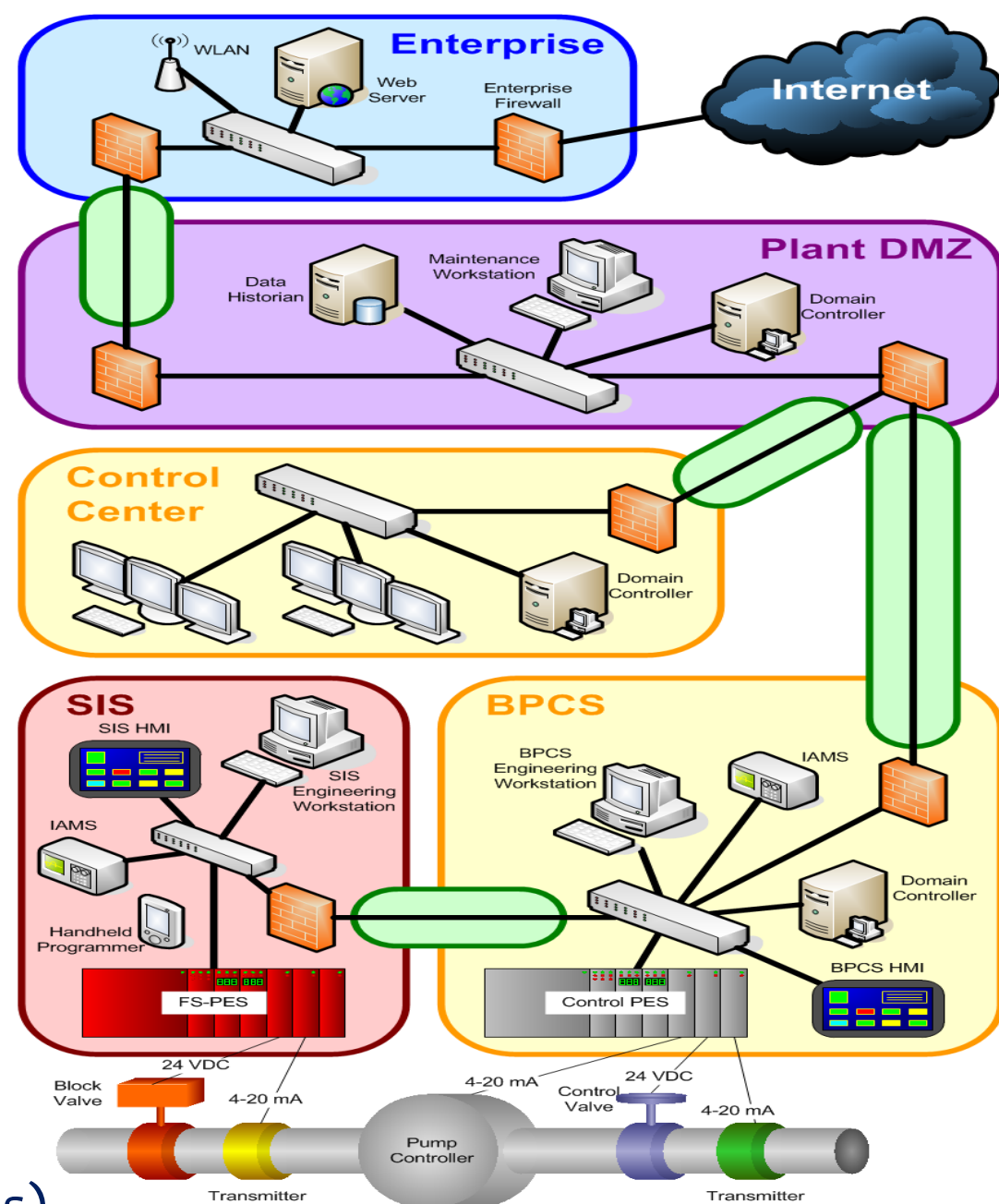
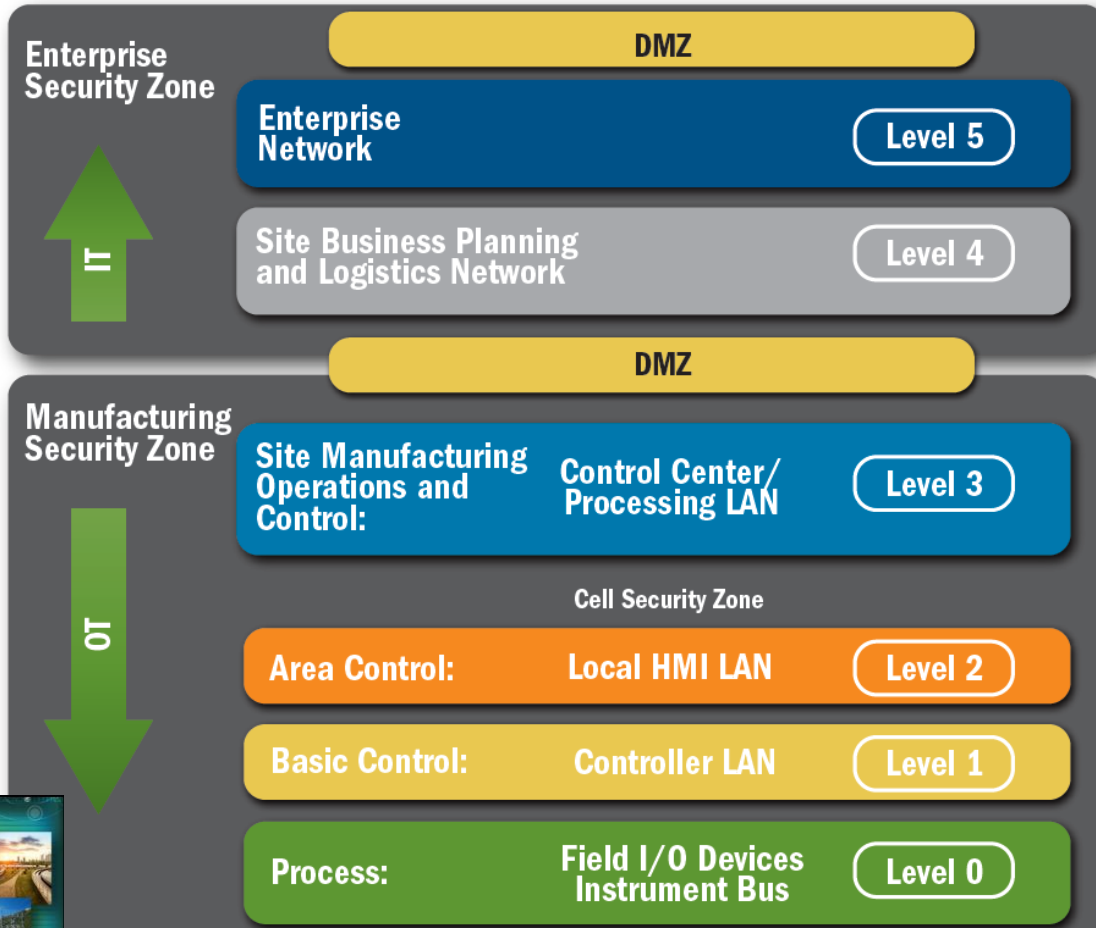




# Architettura di Cyber Security per OT

- **Defense in Depth:** strategia di cybersecurity che consiste in una serie di meccanismi di difesa stratificati. Se un meccanismo fallisce, un altro prende immediatamente il suo posto per contrastare un attacco. Questo approccio a più livelli con ridondanza intenzionale aumenta la sicurezza dell'intero sistema e affronta diversi vettori di attacco;
- **Least-Privilege:** concetto di sicurezza informatica secondo il quale a un utente vengono concessi i livelli minimi - o permessi - di accesso di cui ha bisogno per svolgere le proprie mansioni;
- **Deny-by-Default:** criterio che concede il permesso solo a ciò che è esplicitamente autorizzato, mentre il resto è vietato;
- **Zero Trust:** si basa sul presupposto che nulla, sia all'interno che all'esterno del perimetro di rete di un'organizzazione, debba essere considerato attendibile per impostazione predefinita.

# Segregazione



## Unidirectional Security Gateways (USGs)

<https://www.isa.org/isa99/>



# Sicurezza fisica

RTU sono «disperse» nel territorio in aree di difficile accesso e in assenza di sorveglianza

Gli involucri sono progettati per essere resistenti alle intemperie (IP) o agli urti (IK)

Meno considerata la problematica dell'antiscasso

Prevedere chiusure e sistemi di (video)sorveglianza adeguati



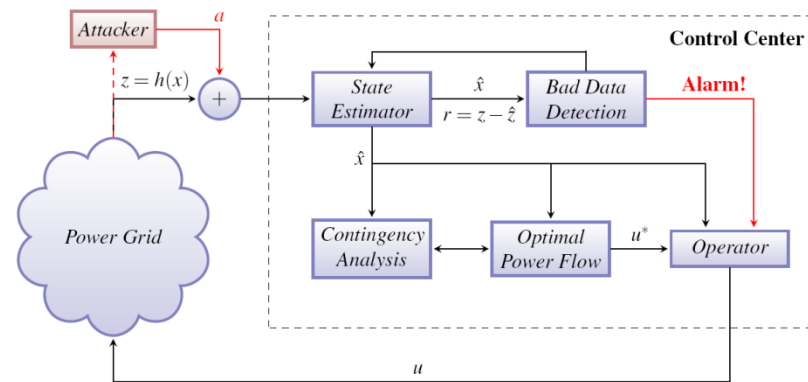
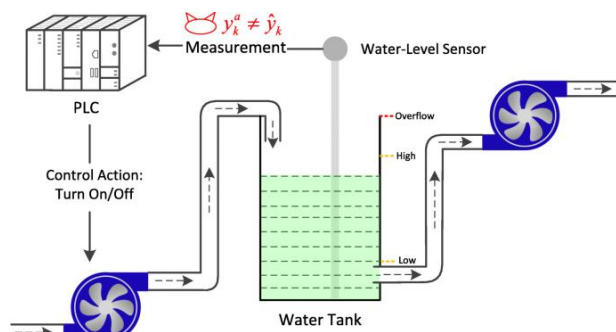
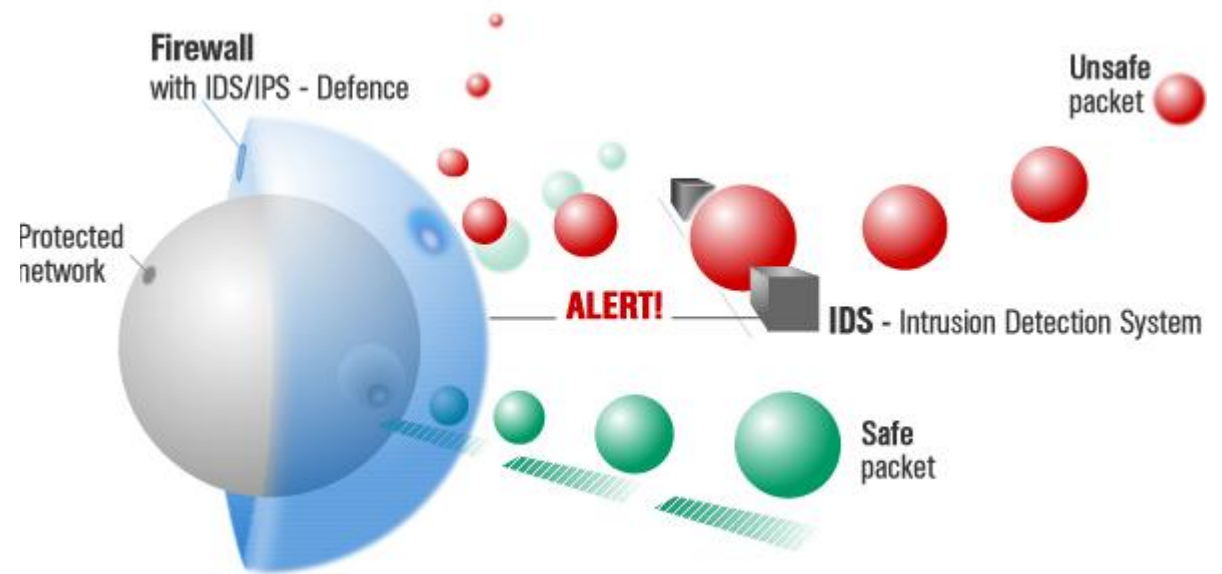
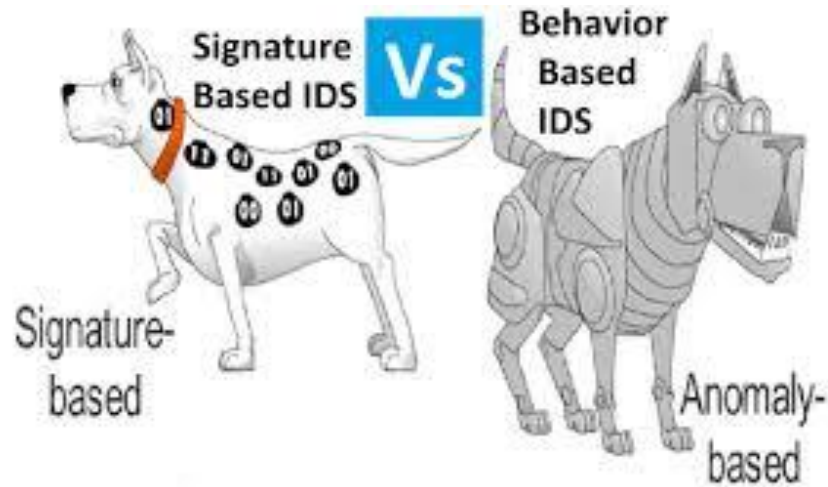
## Guide to Industrial Control Systems (ICS) Security

Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) systems, Distributed Control Systems (DCS), and other control system configurations such as Programmable Logic Controllers (PLC)

Recommendations of the National Institute of Standards and Technology

Keith Stouffer  
Joe Falco  
Karen Scarfone

# Network Security



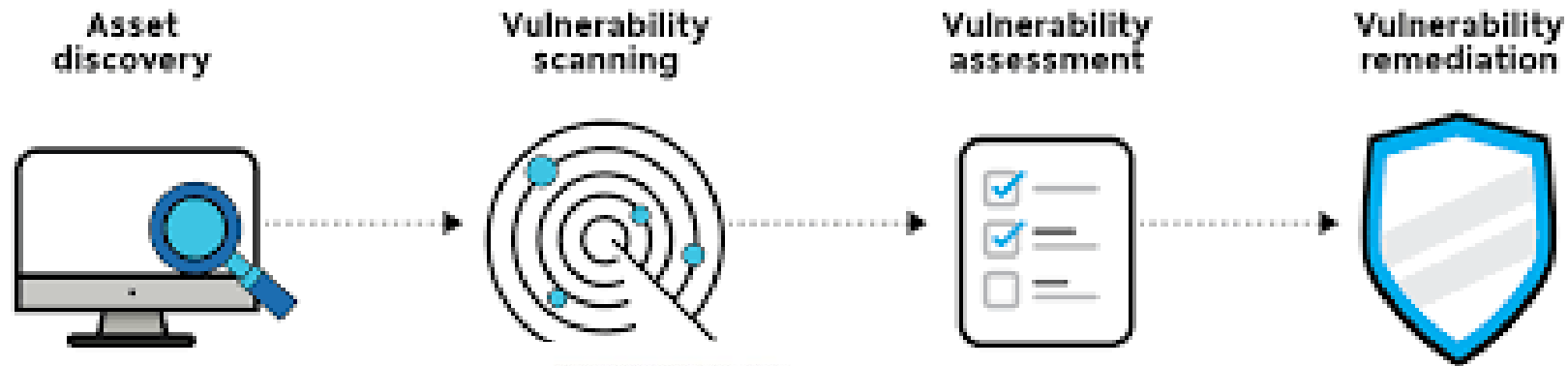
Cyber-Physical anomaly detection system

# Application Security

## Asset inventory

## Whitelisting

## Patching



Common Vulnerabilities and Exposures (CVE) is a dictionary of vulnerabilities and security notes published publicly. It is maintained by MITRE Corporation and is funded by the National Cybersecurity FRDC of the Department of Homeland Security of the United States.

**Common Vulnerabilities and Exposures**  
Il sistema delle **Common Vulnerabilities and Exposures (CVE)** cataloga in modo uniforme vulnerabilità ed esposizioni.  
**Vulnerabilità:** una debolezza nel software e/o nel firmware che, se sfruttata, viola almeno una tra confidenzialità, integrità, disponibilità.  
**Esposizione:** un errore nel software/nella sua configurazione che permette l'accesso a funzioni ed informazioni.

<https://cve.mitre.org/>  
Currently, there are 194,863 CVE Records accessible

Common Vulnerability Scoring System (CVSS)

| CVSS v3.0 - Base Score Metrics                        |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Exploitability Metrics</b>                         | <b>Scope</b>  |
| Attack Vector (AV)                                    | Scope (S)   |
| Network (N)   Adjacent (A)   Local (L)   Physical (P) | Changed (C)   Unchanged (U)   |
| Attack Complexity (AC)                                | <b>Impact Metrics</b>   |
| Low (L)   High (H)   No Exploit (None)                | Confidentiality Impact (C)  |
| Privileges Required (PR)                              | Confidentiality Impact (C)   Integrity Impact (I)   Availability Impact (A) |
| None (N)   Low (L)   High (H)                         | None (N)   Low (L)   Medium (M)   High (H)                                  |
| User Interaction (UI)                                 | Availability Impact (A)   |
| None (N)   Required (R)                               | None (N)   Low (L)   Medium (M)   High (H)                                  |



# Cyber Security procedure



| Rule for                                      | Description  |
|---|--|
| System acquisition                            | policy regarding security check and constraints for software and hardware acquisition, development, integration, implementation and configuration. Elements that are not fully compliant with such criteria cannot be installed in the OT environment  |
| Configuration management and system integrity | set of activities focused on creating and maintaining the integrity of IT products and information systems, through the control of processes for initialization, modification and monitoring of configurations during the life of the element  |
| System maintenance                            | checks regarding system maintenance, in particular regarding the presence of documentation and the regularity of maintenance interventions   |
| Compliance and accreditation                  | continuous assessment procedure of the effectiveness of security controls and the implementation of privacy controls   |
| Physical and environmental protection         | measures to be taken to protect systems, buildings and related support infrastructures from accidental and malicious threats related with physical dimension and environment   |
| Identification and authentication             | Guideline of the process that establishes the identity of an entity that interacts with the system.<br>This element includes also the specification for access control, i.e. the process of granting or refusing specific requests for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• obtain and use information and related IT services;</li> <li>• o access specific physical facilities</li> </ul> |
| Traceability                                  | Set of activities to ensure the traceability of system operations and the availability of logs   |
| System and communications protection          | Implementation rules of security controls for any communication and data transfer  |
| Contingency planning                          | Provisional measures to restore services following an emergency or a system outage   |
| Risk assessment                               | Guideline of the process of identifying risks for operations, resources and individuals resulting from the operation of an IT system   |
| Supply chain risk management                  | Prescription for managing exposure to risks, threats and vulnerabilities in the Supply Chain and for developing strategies in response to the risks presented by third parties, by the products and services provided  |



# ICS supply chain



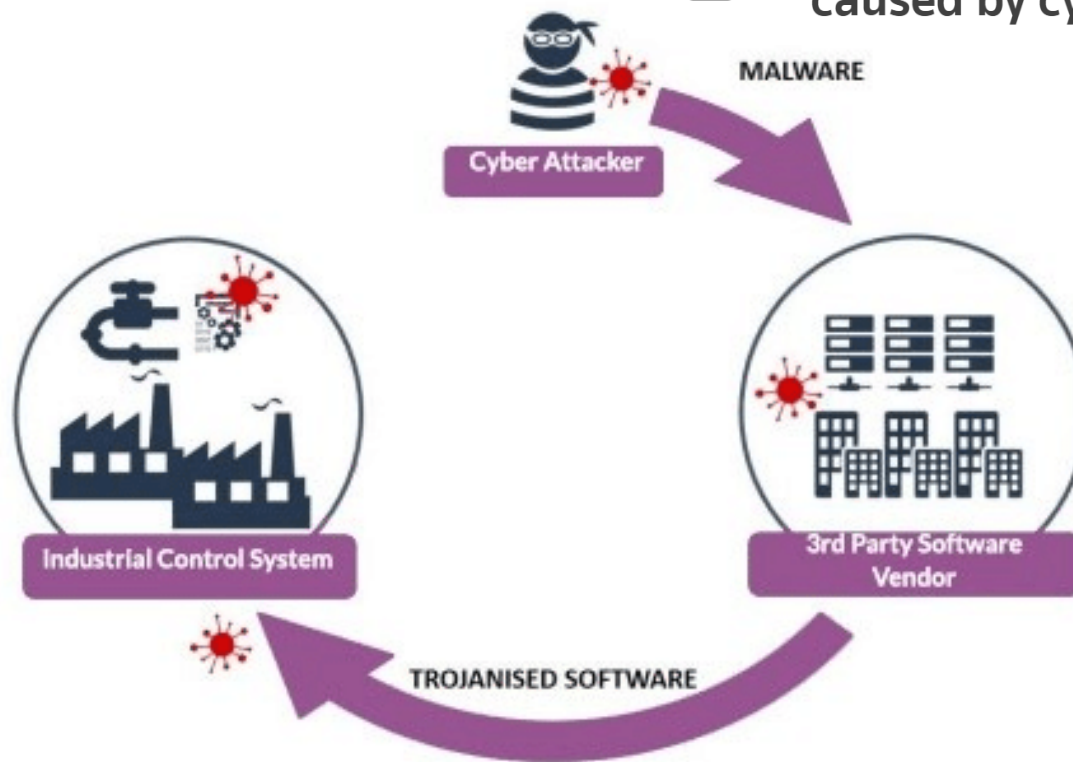
Technology



1 minute read · November 3, 2022 11:01 PM GMT+1 · Last Updated 5 months ago



## Danish train standstill on Saturday caused by cyber attack

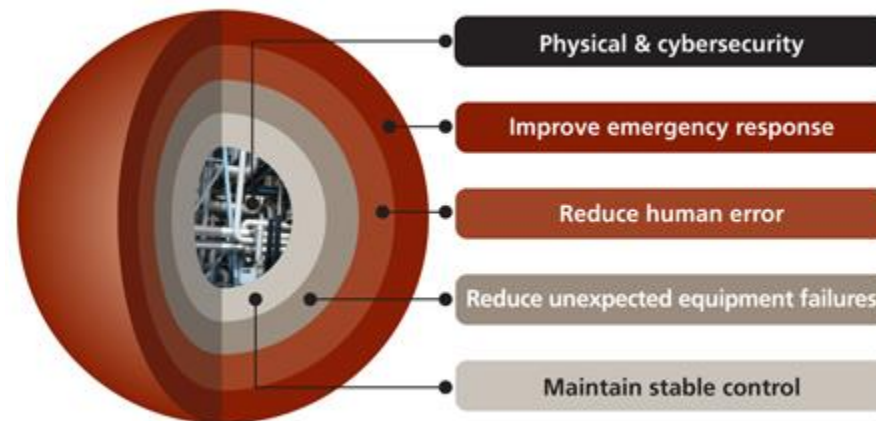
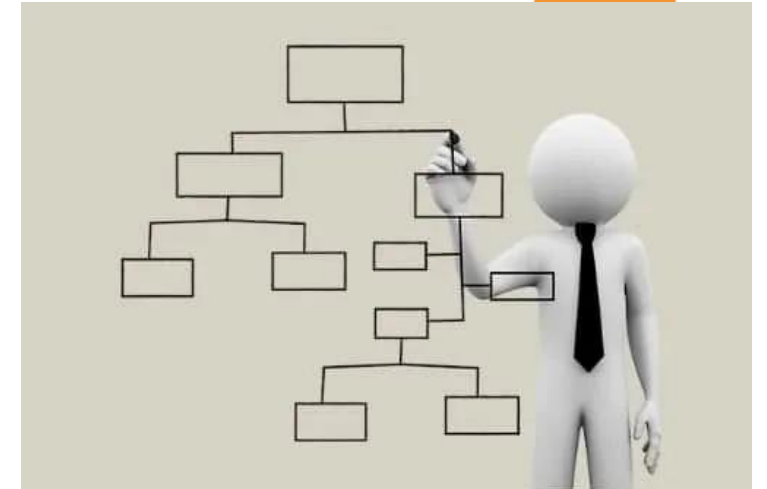






# Organizzazione

- **Necessità di avere un team dedicato alla cybersecurity dei sistemi OT**
- **Segregation of duties**
- **Integrazione Cyber & Physical security**



# Revised Directive on Security of Network and Information Systems (NIS2)



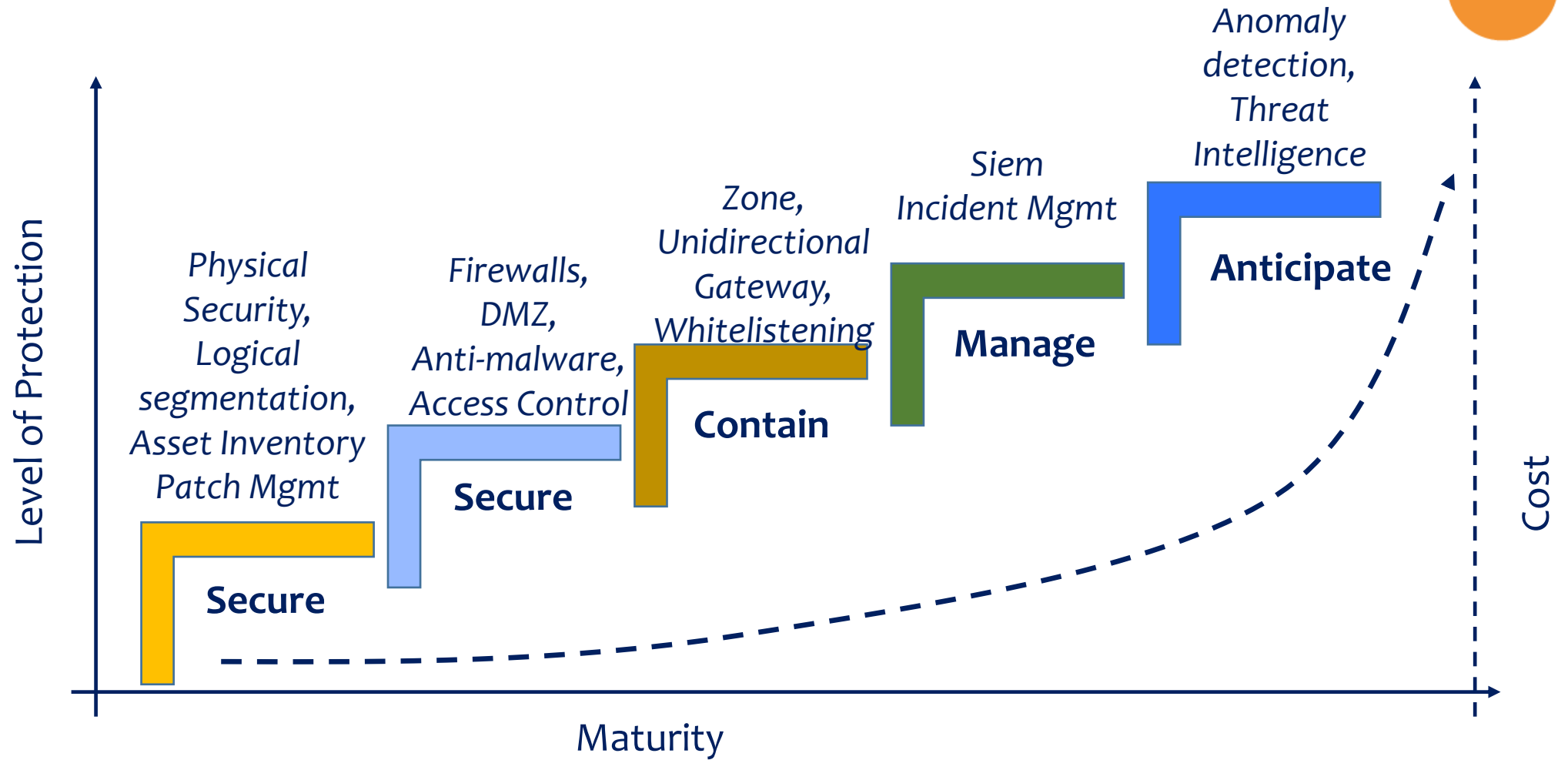
<https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/news/revised-directive-security-network-and-information-systems-nis2>

# New directive to enhance the resilience of critical entities CER



[https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/news/commission-proposes-new-directive-enhance-resilience-critical-entities-providing-essential\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/news/commission-proposes-new-directive-enhance-resilience-critical-entities-providing-essential_en)





# Il principio fondamentale

La sicurezza di un sistema informatico dipende



- **molto dal processo con cui un sistema viene gestito**
  - pianificazione, analisi dei rischi, gestione dei sistemi, formazione del personale, ecc.
- **poco dagli specifici prodotti adottati**
  - specifici firewall, antivirus, ecc.



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