

Covington Launches Cyber Response Team With Mandiant Pro

By **Steven Trader**

Law360, New York (July 21, 2016, 6:26 PM ET) -- Covington & Burling LLP has launched a new cybersecurity incident response team composed of both lawyers and advisers, including a former top executive at information security company Mandiant, to meet the demands of clients facing multiple, concurrent incidents on a global scale, according to a statement by the firm.

Covington announced Monday that it had formed the new “enhanced” team, which will include Stephen Surdu, who has more than 35 years of experience as both a consultant and senior executive at security companies like Mandiant and McAfee. Surdu’s arrival follows that of Jennifer Martin, the former director of cyber incident response and investigations at Symantec, who joined the firm in May.

Covington’s cybersecurity practice already provides an array of services spanning the lifecycle of cybersecurity events, from preparation to response to defense of claims. But David Fagan, head of the firm’s cybersecurity practice, explained to Law360 Thursday that as companies and clients have become more adept at detecting incidents, the firm needed to expand its resources to better handle both the volume and complexity.

“We’re a big firm with clients that span the globe. They can’t control when they have incidents, and you can get calls on a Friday afternoon from three different companies,” Fagan said. “We were experiencing a significant growth in number of those calls. So we’re getting ahead of the curve by identifying it and saying we don’t want to be in a position where we get four calls on a Friday and we can only manage three of them. We want to make sure that when our clients call, we can provide the best resources for them.”

Surdu, who joined the firm on July 1, will not provide legal advice, but will act as an adviser capable of working with multiple teams of responders to translate the technicalities of a breach or attack to a client and help them decide how to proceed.

Prior to joining Covington, Surdu ran the professional services department at Mandiant, and he has experience evaluating and developing policies, assessing network and application vulnerabilities and conducting incident response investigations. He also has “a deep working knowledge” of multiple sectors, including internet service providers, telecommunications, financial, health care, retail and government, the firm said.

“I am excited to join Covington’s cybersecurity incident response team,” Surdu said in a statement Monday. “Covington’s cybersecurity practice is distinguished from those of other law firms because of

its focus and experience on cutting-edge and complex investigations, its understanding of the underlying technology and its depth of expertise across multiple jurisdictions.”

In May, the firm brought Martin on board its data privacy and cybersecurity practice. She began working for Symantec Corp. in 2010 as lead in-house internal investigations counsel before transitioning to the director of incident response and investigations in 2013.

Before Symantec, Martin spent time in a variety of roles that allowed her to tackle cybersecurity from a multitude of angles, including as a managing director at cybersecurity and forensics consulting firm Stroz Friedberg and as a federal and local cybercrime prosecutor.

“Very few people have the experience Jenny’s had,” Fagen said Thursday. “Her whole career has focused on these issues, and she has an in-house perspective as well as an outsider perspective. She’s a terrific resource.”

“With the addition of Jenny and Steve, we now have multiple senior people with experience handling hundreds of breaches who can serve the role of providing direction and translation to our clients, and it ensures we have a team that can manage and respond to multiple incidents on the legal side at the same time,” Fagen added.

--Additional reporting by Allison Grande. Editing by Jack Karp.

All Content © 2003-2016, Portfolio Media, Inc.