



Electronic Identity Management Advisory Committee

Tuesday, July 17, 2012

1:00 p.m.

Speaker's Conference Room, 6th Floor, General Assembly Building

The first meeting of the Electronic Identity Management Advisory Committee of the Joint Commission on Technology and Science was held on July 17, 2012. Advisory Committee members present were Senator John Watkins (chairman), Delegate Kathy Byron, The Honorable Bill Hazel, the Honorable Jim Duffey, Sam Nixon, Mike Farnsworth (designee for Dave Burhop), Duane Stafford, and Joshua Heslinga.¹ In addition to the members of the Advisory Committee, many interested parties from the private sector were present and actively participated in the Committee discussions. A call-in number was also set up to allow for members of the public to participate in the meeting remotely.

The Electronic Identity Management Advisory Committee was established as a result of Senate Joint Resolution 15 (Watkins, 2012). Senator Watkins introduced SJ 15 at the recommendation of JCOTS. SJ 15 stemmed from discussions last year concerning electronic identity management and related liability issues. The resolution directs JCOTS to review the state's role in authenticating an individual's identity as well as the state's role in providing identification documentation. Additionally, JCOTS is directed to review issues regarding third-party liability of electronic credentials issued by private entities. In addition to the mandates of the study resolution, JCOTS also directed the Advisory Commission to review issues related to data sharing among government agencies, an issue highlighted by a proposed amendment by the Governor to the biennial budget that failed to pass the General Assembly.

The Honorable Bill Hazel, Secretary of Health and Human Resources, provided an overview of a current initiative in his Secretariat called eHHR. A copy of his presentation, and an overview of the eHHR program, is available on the JCOTS website. On a very high level, the goals of eHHR are to modernize eligibility and enrollment services, using a framework that could be easily used for other functions. The project is helmed by the Secretary of Health and Human Resources and the Secretary of Technology, and involves several agency heads.

¹ Senator Janet Howell was not present.

Of particular interest to the Advisory Committee is the collaboration with the Department of Motor Vehicles to assist in authenticating that persons who apply for certain services are who they say they are. Because DMV has the most documentation concerning individuals, part of the program involves the establishment of a "Enterprise Services Bus" that using enterprise data management software to verify that an applicant is who he says he is. It is important to note that by comparing data with DMV and other sources, case information is not shared (such as medications, medical history, etc). is not shared -- instead demographic attributes such as date of birth, address, etc. that help to establish an individual's unique identity are compared.

Following Secretary Hazel's presentation, John Biccum, a security strategist at Microsoft, provided a conversational overview of authentication and authorization. In online transactions, it is important to be able to authenticate that a person is who he says he is. Once transactions are moved online, the pool of potential imposters is greatly expanded. There are several online transactions that are technologically feasible, but without being about to authenticate a user to a high degree of probably, are not conducted online. Title transfers are an example. These transactions are not conducted online today, because we lack the ability to authenticate that a person transferring a title is indeed that person.

Standards exist to provide for authentication of individuals. NIST standards range from Level One (the lowest level - self authentication) to Level Four (virtually certain authentication). The costs and complexity increase level to level. There are private vendors that would be interested in selling authentication credentials. However, liability is a key concern. Mr. Biccum indicated that Virginia's study of this issue is trendsetting, and that Virginia has the opportunity to become a magnet for the Internet-based economy. One of the potential solutions is the establishment of a trust framework. With such a framework in place, a credential provider's liability could be capped if he operated according to the provisions of the framework, and an entity accepting the credential would be on notice as to what standards the provider has adhered to. Secretary Hazel noted that this is not unlike the enhanced memorandum of understanding used by the various agencies participating in the eHHR program.

The members of the Committee and the members of the public posed many different questions and issues during the discussion portion of the meeting. Future meeting topics include a presentation concerning Virginia's credentialing efforts for first responders, as well as presentations from the private sector regarding credentialing efforts.

The meeting was adjourned. The next meeting is scheduled for September 17, 2012 at 1:00 p.m. in the 6th Floor Conference Room of the General Assembly Building.