



# City of Buellton

June 8, 2020

Ms. Pamela Olsen, Foreperson  
Santa Barbara County Grand Jury  
Santa Barbara Courthouse  
1100 Anacapa Street  
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

Re: Response to 2020 Grand Jury Report: Cyber-Attacks Threaten Santa Barbara County

Dear Ms. Olsen and Members of the Grand Jury:

Per the request of the Grand Jury, the City of Buellton presents the following responses to the report regarding Cyber Security. We appreciate the opportunity to respond to your inquiry and to convey the City's acknowledgement of the serious nature of this topic as it pertains to local government.

## **Finding 1**

Ensuring critical cyber security tasks and activities are properly executed on a timely basis requires a designated individual to be accountable and responsible.

### **Response to Finding 1 - *AGREE***

## **Recommendation 1**

That each public entity within Santa Barbara County designate an individual to be accountable and responsible to oversee cyber security.

**Response to Recommendation 1 – *HAS BEEN IMPLEMENTED* – Various aspects of Information Technology and Data Management have been overseen by different City Department Heads. However, given the overarching nature of cyber security, the individual to be accountable and responsible for the oversight of cyber security is the City Manager.**

## **Finding 2**

Most public entities within Santa Barbara County have an inadequate understanding of what communication and electronic systems they use and what data they maintain, and do not fully understand the risks, security issues and costs associated with the destruction of systems or loss of data.

**Response to Finding 2 – *DISAGREE PARTIALLY WITH AN EXPLANATION* – the City of Buellton can only agree with this statement as it pertains to its own understanding of its systems and the risks and other issues associated with them. The City of Buellton has no knowledge of other public entities within Santa Barbara County with regard to this issue.**

## **Recommendation 2**

That each public entity within Santa Barbara County complete a full inventory of their data, electronic and communication systems and determine the related security risks.

**Response to Recommendation 2 – *WILL BE IMPLEMENTED* – The City of Buellton will be issuing a Request for Proposals (RFP) for a consultant to perform comprehensive Information Technology management for the City, to include cyber security. This consultant will, as a part of their initial task upon beginning work for the City, conduct the full inventory of data, electronic, and communication systems for the purpose of identifying and minimizing security risks within these systems.**

## **Finding 3**

Some public entities within Santa Barbara County do not have a written cyber security plan.

**Response to Finding 3 - *AGREE***

## **Recommendation 3**

That each public entity within Santa Barbara County establish a written cyber security plan.

**Response to Recommendation 3 – *WILL BE IMPLEMENTED* – The City of Buellton will be issuing a Request for Proposals (RFP) for a consultant to perform comprehensive Information Technology management for the City, to include cyber security. This consultant will, upon completion of the inventory identified in Recommendation 2, establish a written cyber security plan. Once this plan has been approved, the consultant will oversee the implementation of this plan on an on-going basis.**

#### **Finding 4**

Nationally, cyber-attacks on governmental organizations have been successful for many years and are occurring with more frequency and sophistication.

#### **Response to Finding 4 - *AGREE***

#### **Recommendation 4**

That each public entity within Santa Barbara County take substantial steps to protect data from internal and external attacks or threats.

**Response to Recommendation 4 – *REQUIRES FURTHER ANALYSIS*** – *While the City of Buellton has taken steps to protect its data from threats (both internal and external), there is still a question as to whether those steps are adequate in light of modern cyber security threats. Completion of this analysis will occur upon the engagement of an Information Technology consultant, as discussed in responses to previous recommendations, with corrective measures (if necessary) undertaken upon identification.*

#### **Finding 5**

Cyber-attackers use a number of methods to install malicious software on systems including access through backdoors, staff or employee carelessness, and known bugs in software.

#### **Response to Finding 5 - *AGREE***

#### **Recommendation 5a**

That each public entity within Santa Barbara County install and maintain current antivirus software to detect malware and other threats.

**Response to Recommendation 5a – *HAS BEEN IMPLEMENTED*** – *The City of Buellton has installed antivirus software on all of its computers and servers to avoid, detect, and eliminate malware and other threats to its systems. This software is regularly updated.*

#### **Recommendation 5b**

That each public entity within Santa Barbara County install and update all operating software regularly.

**Response to Recommendation 5b – *WILL BE IMPLEMENTED*** – *The City of Buellton has ensured that the operating systems of all of its computers and servers are regularly updated with all recommended security updates and patches. However, in*



*January of 2020, a number of the computers operated by the City were running the Windows 7 operating system, which ceased to be supported with such security updates by Microsoft. Critical devices, such as servers and desktop/laptop devices which are used to access finance applications and other sensitive data, were upgraded to Windows 10. Some less critical devices have not yet been upgraded, due to budgetary constraints. However, these are scheduled for upgrade to Windows 10 in the coming Fiscal Year 2020/21 budget, and will be upgraded shortly.*

#### **Recommendation 5c**

That each public entity within Santa Barbara County periodically train employees and then test their cyber security awareness.

*Response to Recommendation 5c – WILL BE IMPLEMENTED – The City of Buellton will be issuing a Request for Proposals (RFP) for a consultant to perform comprehensive Information Technology management for the City, to include cyber security. This consultant will be responsible for establishing a training regimen for employees, and will conduct periodic testing of security practices and protocols to ensure that cyber security awareness continues to be a priority.*

#### **Recommendation 5d**

That each public entity within Santa Barbara County periodically ensure electronic system-related contractors have been trained for cyber security awareness.

*Response to Recommendation 5d – WILL BE IMPLEMENTED – The City of Buellton will be issuing a Request for Proposals (RFP) for a consultant to perform comprehensive Information Technology management for the City, to include cyber security. Responses to the RFP will be asked to include documentation of certification and additional training (to include continuing education) in cyber security awareness, technologies, and best practices.*

#### **Finding 6**

If data is lost or compromised for any reason, including cyber-attack, mechanical failure or error, the most cost effective and expedient way to recover is to have current data backups and a plan to reinstall it.

**Response to Finding 6 - AGREE**

#### **Recommendation 6a**

That each public entity within Santa Barbara County create and implement a full backup and recovery plan.

**Response to Recommendation 6a – *HAS BEEN IMPLEMENTED* – *The City of Buellton has developed a full backup and recovery plan, which has been used for recovery of data lost in the past.***

**Recommendation 6b**

That each public entity within Santa Barbara County regularly update and test their backup and recovery plan.

**Response to Recommendation 6b– *WILL BE IMPLEMENTED* – *The City of Buellton will be issuing a Request for Proposals (RFP) for a consultant to perform comprehensive Information Technology management for the City, to include cyber security. This consultant will be responsible for evaluating the effectiveness of the City’s existing backup and recovery plan, making changes to that plan where appropriate, and conducting periodic testing of the plan to ensure its adequacy.***

**Finding 7**

Some public entities within Santa Barbara County do not have any, or adequate, cyber insurance.

**Response to Finding 7 - *AGREE***

**Recommendation 7**

That each public entity within Santa Barbara County secure adequate cyber insurance.

**Response to Recommendation 7 – *REQUIRES FURTHER ANALYSIS* – *The City of Buellton will be issuing an RFP for a consultant to perform comprehensive Information Technology management for the City, to include cyber security. As part of a cyber security planning effort, this consultant will be tasked with analyzing the City’s need for cyber insurance, and recommending to the City Manager an adequate amount of insurance, as well as a list of providers of such insurance.***

**Finding 8**

A cost-effective method to address cyber risks and concerns is to form an information sharing and learning consortium.

**Response to Finding 8 - *AGREE***

**Recommendation 8**

That each public entity within Santa Barbara County that is unable to allocate adequate funds for cyber security develop a cybersecurity working group to establish best practices and share costs for education, expertise, and insurance.

**Response to Recommendation 8 – *REQUIRES FURTHER ANALYSIS* – The City of Buellton expects to be able to allocate adequate funding for cyber security considerations within its Information Technology management program. However, the participation in such a working group with other agencies may, nevertheless, be beneficial. Moving forward, the City will investigate the benefits of participating with other jurisdictions or agencies in such a working group to enhance cyber security within the County.**

The City of Buellton hopes that you have found these responses both sufficient and useful. Should additional information be required, please feel free to contact me directly.

Respectfully Submitted,

  
Scott Wolfe, AICP  
City Manager

Cc: The Honorable Judge Michael J. Carrozzo  
1100 Anacapa Street  
Santa Barbara, CA 93101