Awareness in Action: Case Study

Who could become an insider threat? Anyone with authorized access to U.S. Government resources who uses that access, either wittingly or unwittingly, to harm national security. Insider threats can have far reaching consequences and impacts on national security.

Reuters Photo

Christopher Boyce

- Targeted TRW
- TRW Code Clerk
- Age at conviction: 24
- Conviction date: 14 May 1977
- Charges: Espionage, spying for the Soviet Union
- Sentence: 40 years prison term

Espionage Indicators

- Unexplained Affluence
- Drug usage
- Ego driven

What Happened

- The conspiracy was first identified when Boyce's accomplice, Andrew Lee, was arrested outside of the Soviet Embassy in Mexico City.
- Boyce conspired with Lee to steal and sell U.S. classified code material in an effort to sabotage U.S. Intelligence efforts.
- Lee traveled extensively throughout Mexico to deliver the stolen information to his KGB handlers.
- The Soviet Union paid Boyce and Lee approximately $70,000.00 for the information.
- Andrew Lee was also arrested, prosecuted, and convicted in the case. Lee was sentenced to life in prison.
- This case is better known as the "Falcon and the Snowman."

Impacts

- The company lost valuable research that impacted numerous projects.
- Long-held trade secrets were disclosed to competitors and the public.
- Profits from current and future projects were compromised.
- U.S. communications ciphers and classified information on U.S. spy satellites were compromised.

Learn More

This case study examined a real-life insider threat. Your awareness is key to protecting our national security from insider threats like this one. Visit the Center for Development of Security Excellence's website (http://www.cdse.edu) for additional case studies, information, materials, and training or go directly to the Insider Threat Toolkit at http://www.cdse.edu/toolkits/insider/index.php.

If you SEE something, SAY something.