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INCREASED TELEWORK DEMANDS SHOW FEDERAL CYBERSECURITY STRATEGIES STILL NEED PROGRESS

84% agree cybersecurity is a top or high priority within their agency, but just 51% rate the state of cybersecurity within their agency as “very effective”

Alexandria, Va., June 22, 2020 – MeriTalk, a public-private partnership focused on improving the outcomes of government IT, today announced the results of its new report, [“Federal Cybersecurity in a Changing World.”](#) The results show that while cybersecurity is a top priority for Federal agencies, there is still a long way to go in converting attention to action. Despite an increased focus on cybersecurity due to widespread telework demands, just half of Federal agencies feel their efforts are “very effective.”

The study, in partnership with Forcepoint, is based on a survey of 150 Federal IT managers and compiled qualitative data from in-depth interviews with Federal IT leaders. The report explores the current state of cybersecurity in Federal agencies and offers recommendations to advance cyber progress.

While eighty-four percent of Federal IT managers agree cybersecurity is a top or high priority within their agency, just fifty-one percent rate the state of cybersecurity within their agency as “very effective” and only thirty-four percent say their senior leadership is fully engaged. When asked about the biggest challenges in formulating an agency’s cybersecurity strategy, understanding evolving cybersecurity threats (42 percent), challenges of migrating to the cloud (37 percent), and understanding technical vulnerabilities (34 percent), were among the top pain points.

Moving forward, Federal IT managers and leaders see the ideal cyber strategy as proactive and risk-focused. If given the chance to rebuild their strategy, survey respondents would start with a zero trust model and ensure full-scope visibility into the network. To get there, agencies will need to overcome budget and legacy challenges, defend against malware, and derive value from innovative security technologies like artificial intelligence. Additionally, respondents report that data masking,

biometric authentication, behavior-based policy enforcement, and integrated suites will be valuable technologies for agencies to leverage within the next three to five years.

“For the first time in modern business, CISOs aren’t operating within the tight controls of their security program. And, Federal agencies are being forced to quickly modernize and adapt in the current extended telework environment,” said Sean Berg, Senior Vice President and General Manager of Forcepoint Global Governments and Critical Infrastructure. “Security architectures are breaking while security risk postures are rising and we are seeing a bigger push than ever for government agencies to accelerate their pivot to the cloud to keep operations optimally running and employees productive in this new distributed workforce reality. Addressing security within this new environment provides an opportunity for agencies to integrate security as a true operational enabler for their organization while also significantly advancing their cybersecurity posture.”

“Federal Cybersecurity in a Changing World” is based on an online survey of more than 150 Federal IT managers and compiled of qualitative data from in-depth interviews with Federal cybersecurity leaders in April and May 2020. The study is underwritten by Forcepoint. The report has a margin of error of ± 7.97 percent at a 95 percent confidence level. To download the full report, please visit <https://www.meritalk.com/study/federal-cybersecurity-in-a-changing-world/>

About MeriTalk

The voice of tomorrow’s government today, MeriTalk is a public-private partnership focused on improving the outcomes of government IT. Our award-winning editorial team and world-class events and research staff produces unmatched news, analysis, and insight. The goal: more efficient, responsive, and citizen-centric government. MeriTalk connects with an audience of 151,000 Federal community contacts. For more information, visit www.MeriTalk.com or follow us on Twitter, @MeriTalk. MeriTalk is a [300Brand](#) organization.

About Forcepoint

Forcepoint is the global cybersecurity leader for user and data protection. Forcepoint’s behavior-based solutions adapt to risk in real-time and are delivered through a converged security platform that protects network users and cloud access, prevents confidential data from leaving the corporate network, and eliminates breaches caused by insiders. Based in Austin, Texas, Forcepoint creates safe, trusted environments for thousands of enterprise and government customers and their

employees in more than 150 countries. For more information, please visit www.forcepoint.com and follow Forcepoint on [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#), and [Twitter](#).

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