SHAHUL HAMEED

Chief Information Security Officer (CISO) | Information Security Leader | Security Architect
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PROFILE

Results-driven Information Security Leader with 20+ years transforming cybersecurity postures for government and enterprise organizations. Proven track record implementing ISO 27001, NIST CSF, and Zero Trust architectures across hybrid cloud environments. Led security operations protecting critical infrastructure serving 15M+ visitors annually with zero breaches. Expert in GRC, threat intelligence, SIEM/SOAR, and Azure security stack (Sentinel, Defender, CAS). Certified CISSP, CISM, CISA, CCSP, CCSK, CCZT holding 15+ industry certifications.

CORE COMPETENCIES

Security Strategy & Roadmaps | Security Governance & Policy | Enterprise Risk Management | GRC & Compliance (ISO 27001, GDPR, UAE IA) | Audit Readiness & CAPA | SOC/SecOps Leadership | Managed Security Services (MSS) Governance | SIEM/SOAR & XDR (Sentinel, Defender) | Threat Detection & Incident Response | Vulnerability Management | Penetration Testing | Application Security (AppSec) | Secure SDLC | DevSecOps | Security Architecture & Zero Trust | Cloud Security (Azure, M365) | Budgeting | Security Dashboards and KPIs | Security Awareness Campaigns | Executive Reporting

PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATIONS

Elite Security & Cloud (ISC²)
- CISSP® — Certified Information Systems Security Professional (ISC²)
- CCSP® — Certified Cloud Security Professional (ISC²)

Governance, Risk & Audit (ISACA)
- CISM® — Certified Information Security Manager (ISACA)
- CISA® — Certified Information Systems Auditor (ISACA)
- COBIT® Foundation — IT Governance Framework (ISACA)

Cloud & Zero Trust (CSA)
- CCSK — Certificate of Cloud Security Knowledge (Cloud Security Alliance)
- CCZT — Certificate of Zero Trust Knowledge (Cloud Security Alliance)

AI Governance & Management (ISO 42001)
- ISO/IEC 42001 Lead Auditor — AI Management Systems (In Progress)
- ISO/IEC 42001 Lead Implementer — AI Management Systems (In Progress)

Architecture & Frameworks
- TOGAF® 9 — Certified Enterprise Architect (The Open Group)
- CEH — Certified Ethical Hacker (EC-Council)
- ITIL® Foundation — v2 & v3 (AXELOS)
- CMMI — Introduction to CMMI for Development v1.3 (SEI)
- CompTIA Security+

Microsoft Azure Stack
- Azure Security Engineer Associate | Azure Administrator | Azure Fundamentals
- MCP | MCSE | MCSA

Cisco Networking
- CCNP | CCSP | CCDP | CCNA | CCDA

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE & TOURISM, ABU DHABI, UAE

Security Operations Unit Head | Museums Shared Services Aug 2023 - Present

Leading Information Security operations function across DCT's Museums Shared Services portfolio, overseeing enterprise-grade protection for digital assets, cultural collections, and visitor-facing platforms.

- ***Developed and operationalized an enterprise information security strategy*** *encompassing threat risk assessment, policy formulation, security controls implementation, and incident response planning—aligned with organizational goals, UAE IA regulations, and international best practices.*
- ***Managed the Information Security budget and strategic resource allocation****, optimizing security investments to maximize ROI while ensuring cost-effective procurement of advanced tools and managed services.*
- ***Architected and enforced a Security-by-Design governance model****, mandating that all new system implementations undergo security architecture review and meet organizational standards before go-live, minimizing residual risk and ensuring compliance alignment.*
- ***Established AI Governance Framework and security controls*** *aligned with ISO/IEC 42001 standards, implementing risk assessment methodologies, ethical AI guidelines, and secure AI/ML lifecycle management to ensure responsible AI adoption while maintaining organizational compliance.*
- ***Championed a proactive security culture through targeted awareness campaigns*** *and phishing simulations, significantly reducing human error rates and fostering a "security-first" mindset across all organizational levels.*
- ***Led periodic compliance audits*** *of infrastructure and systems against ISO 27001, GDPR, and UAE IA (ADSIC/NESA) frameworks, identifying non-conformities and driving corrective action plans to maintain certification readiness year-round.*
- ***Overhauled Information Security Operations*** *by reengineering security monitoring workflows, establishing measurable KPIs, and closing critical capability gaps—resulting in a significantly strengthened security posture and measurable gains in operational efficiency.*
- ***Engineered a resilient Supply Chain Security framework****, implementing rigorous third-party risk assessments (TPRM) and continuous vendor monitoring to mitigate upstream vulnerabilities and ensure integrity across the digital ecosystem.*
- ***Spearheaded enterprise-wide deployment*** *of Microsoft Sentinel (SIEM), Microsoft Defender XDR, and Cloud App Security (CASB) across the full infrastructure stack, delivering end-to-end threat visibility, automated incident response, and hardened cloud security posture.*
- ***Executed comprehensive VAPT programs*** *across network, application, and cloud layers—identifying, triaging, and driving remediation of critical and high-severity vulnerabilities in collaboration with technical teams and business stakeholders.*

DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE & TOURISM, ABU DHABI, UAE

IT Security Unit Head (IT Section Head) | Zayed National Museum Aug 2022 - Aug 2023

Directed the technology and cybersecurity strategy for one of the UAE's most anticipated cultural landmarks, acting as the primary liaison between the museum's executive leadership and DCT's centralized IT shared services.

- ***Established the museum's technology operating model from greenfield****, defining business-critical IT requirements, strategic objectives, and operational procedures to ensure seamless alignment with DCT's enterprise IT delivery capabilities.*
- ***Formulated and managed the museum's dedicated IT and Security budget****, governing financial accountability, negotiating technology requirements, and ensuring central IT and third-party vendors met stringent SLAs and museum-specific demands.*
- ***Architected a localized Information Security Strategy and Framework****—tailored to museum-specific risks—directing central IT teams to implement ISO 27001-aligned controls to safeguard irreplaceable digital archives, collections data, and visitor information.*
- ***Implemented an IT Governance and Oversight model****, embedding security-by-design into all museum projects and ensuring central IT deployments fully complied with UAE IA, GDPR, and localized data protection mandates.*
- ***Championed a localized security-aware culture*** *ahead of the museum's opening, deploying structured cybersecurity awareness programs tailored to museum staff and curators, driving measurable improvements in human risk reduction.*

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE & TOURISM, ABU DHABI, UAE

Head of Technical Engineering Section | IT Department Jun 2021 - Aug 2022

Appointed to lead DCT's Technical Engineering Section, directing a multi-disciplinary organization encompassing Security Operations, Hybrid Infrastructure, Application Development, and the Desktop Unit to support enterprise-wide digital operations.

- ***Spearheaded IT strategic planning and financial governance**, aligning the engineering roadmap with enterprise digital transformation objectives while optimizing budgets across Security, Infrastructure, and Application Development portfolios.*
- ***Designed and delivered executive-level technical reporting**, translating complex operational metrics, security postures, and project statuses into actionable business intelligence for C-suite decision-making.*
- ***Managed strategic vendor and partner relationships**, negotiating complex service contracts and overseeing the delivery of third-party products to ensure stringent SLA, infrastructure availability, and security compliance.*
- ***Mentored and developed a high-performing, cross-functional engineering team**, cultivating a culture of technical excellence, continuous learning, and collaborative problem-solving across disparate IT disciplines.*
- ***Governed enterprise infrastructure lifecycle and BCDR strategies**, ensuring the resilience of critical systems and executing formal Incident Response Plans to maintain continuous operations during crisis scenarios.*
- ***Directed a multi-layered enterprise security architecture and 24/7 SOC operations**, safeguarding networks, applications, and endpoints against advanced threats through continuous monitoring and rapid incident response.*
- ***Orchestrated the administration of a complex hybrid cloud ecosystem** (Azure IaaS/PaaS/SaaS) alongside on-premises data centers, ensuring seamless integration, high availability, and proactive cloud cost management.*
- ***Championed DevSecOps and secure SDLC within the Application Development Unit**, embedding secure coding practices, rigorous QA testing, and continuous security assessments into the delivery of all organizational software.*
- ***Managed the Enterprise Desktop Unit and End-User Computing (EUC) strategy**, overseeing the secure provisioning, lifecycle management, and tiered support of thousands of endpoints to ensure workforce productivity across distributed teams.*

DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE & TOURISM, ABU DHABI, UAE

IT Governance & Compliance Unit Head | Corporate Security Section Jul 2019 - Jun 2021

Directed the enterprise Security Governance and Compliance (SGC) Unit, serving as the strategic advisor to executive leadership on cyber risk and regulatory alignment.

- ***Architected and institutionalized a strategic Security Governance Framework**, successfully aligning IT security operations and risk tolerance with DCT's enterprise business objectives.*
- ***Authored and modernized the enterprise IT security policy library**, while managing the SGC Unit budget and engineering a fully compliant Incident Response Plan (IRP).*
- ***Established an enterprise cyber risk management lifecycle**, conducting rigorous threat modeling to mitigate IT, third-party, and vendor-related security risks.*
- ***Achieved and sustained enterprise compliance** with stringent mandates, including ISO/IEC 27001, GDPR, and UAE Information Assurance (ADSIC/NESA), through robust control matrices.*
- ***Orchestrated comprehensive internal and external compliance audits**, driving corrective action plans (CAPs) and presenting formal compliance reports to senior management and regulatory bodies (NESA).*

DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE & TOURISM, ABU DHABI, UAE

Infrastructure Lead | IT Department Feb 2019 - Jul 2019

Directed enterprise IT infrastructure operations and a cross-functional engineering team, ensuring the high availability, security, and scalability of foundational technologies supporting DCT's core business units.

- ***Spearheaded enterprise infrastructure strategy, budget, and deployment**, overseeing the seamless implementation of new network architectures and systems with zero critical disruption, while negotiating enterprise procurement contracts to maximize ROI.*
- ***Designed and maintained robust Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery (BCDR)** architectures, ensuring critical systems and data met stringent RTO/RPO objectives in alignment with industry standards and regulatory compliance.*
- ***Engineered and enforced comprehensive infrastructure security controls**, hardening network components against emerging cyber threats and aligning proactive monitoring tools to guarantee high availability and resolve operational bottlenecks.*

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE & TOURISM, ABU DHABI, UAE
Senior Security Administrator | IT Department Jan 2015 - Feb 2019
IT Security Expert | IT Department Sep 2013 - Jan 2015
Security Administrator | IT Department Feb 2011 - Aug 2013
Progressed through multiple technical roles over 8 years, serving as the primary subject matter expert and architect for enterprise security operations, infrastructure defense, and threat management.

- ***Engineered and administered the enterprise network security stack*** *and complex IAM controls, managing firewalls and IDS/IPS to successfully maintain a zero-breach environment across a highly targeted infrastructure over an 8-year period.*
- ***Deployed centralized SIEM solutions and orchestrated end-to-end Incident Response (IR)*** *lifecycles, establishing robust threat-hunting capabilities and institutionalizing forensic "lessons learned" to harden future security postures.*
- ***Governed enterprise vulnerability management (VAPT) programs****, continuously identifying and coordinating the patching of critical flaws while embedding "security-by-design" principles into all new enterprise IT initiatives and system deployments.*
- ***Achieved and maintained continuous compliance*** *with ISO/IEC 27001 and ADSIC standards by conducting rigorous IT risk assessments, authoring comprehensive security policies, and designing Security Awareness Training for thousands of employees.*

EARLY CAREER & FOUNDATIONAL EXPERIENCE

ABU DHABI INVESTMENT AUTHORITY (ADIA), ABU DHABI, UAE
Network Administrator | IT Department Mar 2007 - Sep 2009

- ***Engineered high-availability network infrastructure and security firewalls*** *supporting rigorous sovereign wealth fund operations, notably executing a zero-downtime corporate headquarters migration that ensured uninterrupted financial trading.*

Seven Seas Computers, Abu Dhabi, UAE
Systems Engineer Sep 2005 - Nov 2011

- ***Designed and deployed complex enterprise IT architectures*** *for diverse corporate clients, directing end-to-end IT project lifecycles encompassing requirements gathering, vendor negotiation, and rigorous security integration.*

AWARDS & RECOGNITION

- **Zero-Breach Security Operations Excellence Award** | Recognized for maintaining an unblemished zero-security-breach record while leading one of the UAE's top-five most targeted government organizations—a testament to a proactive, intelligence-led security posture.
- **ISO/IEC 27001 Certification Champion** | Received organizational accolade for spearheading the achievement of ISO 27001 certification and sustaining continuous compliance for 14+ consecutive years (2010–Present)—an extraordinary benchmark in the GCC government sector.
- **Global Cyber Outstanding Security Performance Awards - Finalist (2021)** | Recognized among the world's top cybersecurity practitioners for exceptional security leadership and operational performance excellence.
- **Cloud Transformation Excellence Award** | Received accolades for delivering a zero-downtime enterprise migration from on-premises infrastructure to Microsoft Azure and Office 365, alongside the full consolidation and centralization of data centers and applications.
- **Multiple Performance Excellence Nominations** | Consistently nominated for prestigious leadership and management awards across tenure, reflecting sustained high performance, organizational impact, and executive-level stakeholder recognition.

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Engineering - Electronics & Communication
Madurai Kamaraj University, India
Master of Business Administration - Information Technology
Sikkim Manipal University, India
Master of Science in Cyber Security *(pursuing)*
Madras University, India