



Cyber Eagle 2025: the Cyber Defense of the Italian Air Force

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The eleventh edition of **Cyber Eagle**, the main and most extensive annual cyber defense exercise of the Italian Air Force, hosted at the Automated Information Systems Department (**ReSIA**), concluded today, Thursday, December 11. The event, which lasted six months, represented an intense phase of evaluation and continuous improvement of the cyber security posture of the Armed Forces.

Important personalities attended the presentation of the final results, including the Undersecretary of Defense, Hon. Matteo Perego di Cremona, and the Chief of Staff of the Italian Air Force, Gen. S.A. Antonio Conserva, along with numerous military and civilian authorities.

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A Cross-cutting Challenge: IT and OT under Examination

The exercise involved personnel from ReSIA, in synergy with the Network Operations Command (**COR**) of Defense and under the supervision of the 3rd Division of the Logistics Command, in coordination with the General Security Department.

For the first time, the activity had a particularly significant impact on two crucial operational departments: the **46th Air Brigade of Pisa** and the **Experimental and Standardization Air Shooting Department (RSSTA) of Decimomannu**. Here, the security of essential systems related to **navigation** and **airport air traffic control** was deeply tested.

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The scope of analysis focused on both the **IT** (Information Technology) network, the backbone of application services, and the **OT** (Operational Technology) network, which manages vital airport facilities, sensors, and infrastructures.

- **Data and Numbers:** The breadth of the exercise is evidenced by the involvement of **over 38,000 workstations** and the analysis of about **300 Terabytes of data**, allowing for a verification of the departments' response to threat scenarios in authentic operational conditions.
- **Resilience Test:** Through the use of *Red Team*, which simulated the tactics of APT (*Advanced Persistent Threat*) groups, the resilience of services was tested, evaluating the capabilities of discovery, mitigation, and recovery.

The activities included the simulation of compromises, checks on the operational continuity of flight systems, and the coordinated management of events through the **Security Operation Center** of the Italian Air Force. A test environment based on the **SCADA** platform was also used, essential for simulating complex scenarios without interfering with real operations.

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Institutional Statements

The **Chief of Staff of the Italian Air Force, Gen. S.A. Antonio Conserva**, emphasized the centrality of the digital domain:

*“For the Italian Air Force, the digital dimension is not an accessory element but a **pillar of operational capabilities**... We are facing a range of **cross-cutting threats and constantly evolving technologies**. It is a great challenge that requires new tools, highly specialized professionals, and cross-cutting capabilities to ensure the country's defense needs.”*

The **Hon. Matteo Perego di Cremona**, Undersecretary of Defense, highlighted the strategic importance of interconnection and the cyber domain in the context of hybrid warfare:

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*“The cyber domain can no longer be considered separate, as it permeates every aspect of our daily lives... **Defending critical infrastructures and ensuring the nation's resilience**, even in this area, is a strategic priority for the country's security.”*

The Undersecretary praised the exercise as an example of **"virtuous collaboration between Defense, industry, and institutions"**, highlighting how the establishment of the Cyber Corps is a "far-sighted strategic choice for the resilience of national defense and security."

The importance of public-private synergy was also reiterated by **General Enzo Vecciarelli**, President and CEO of Deas Cyber+, a partner of the exercise:

*“We must create the conditions for the country to systematically have access to the extraordinary talents that come from the private sector... Working with passion for a higher purpose, the **security of Italy and its citizens**.”*

Cyber Eagle 2025 is thus confirmed not only as an annual exercise but as a reference model for **public-private partnership**, essential to strengthen the overall effectiveness of Defense and tackle the challenge of cyber deterrence.

News link: <https://www.aeronautica.difesa.it/news/cyber-defence-conclusa-la-cyber-eagle-2025-sei-mesi-di-esercitazione-sulle-difese-cibernetiche-dellaeronautica-militare/>