

The Cambridge Institute of International Education
A Company in The Cambridge Network
Security Breach Q&A

Q: What happened?

A: As far as we have learned, a professional security firm – MacKeeper – uncovered and reported vulnerabilities on one of our test servers on June 6, 2016. A more accurate report was published by DataBreaches.net on June 7. MacKeeper had no nefarious goals; the company searches for security flaws as part of its mission. As soon as we were notified of our vulnerabilities, we shut down our servers and began our investigation. As of this time, our investigation has not found any evidence that student, school or host family data was copied, altered or removed. Our immediate goal is to make sure that all our students and partners are protected.

Q: What was the volume of exposed student and host family data?

A: The server at issue was created for a special reporting project outside of our normal development cycle; it was not the company's main database, which is secure. The test server contained data of under 9,000 students and approximately 12,000 host families.

Q: What information was exposed?

A: Although we are continuing our investigation, at this time it appears that host families' names, addresses and phone numbers were exposed, as well as personal information about our international students. This could include private medical information as it is collected at the time of our students' arrival in the United States.

Q: Has any personally identifiable information been taken and/or released?

A: After an initial review, it is our belief that no information was captured. We will continue to study the server reports and reach out to our partners to ensure that this exposure occurred without ongoing consequences.

Q: What is the company doing about it?

A: Although we that believe no information was stolen, we are contacting host families, students, and schools to update them on the security flaw and providing any support we can.

Q: How will this event affect The Cambridge Institute of International Education going forward?

A: We make every effort to ensure that our students, their families, host families and schools' information is secure within our organization, and we will continue to make that our first priority. Going forward, we will put additional focus on cyber-security as a key element in protecting our students and their families here and abroad.

Q: What will you do differently going forward?

A: We are still conducting our internal review and will make any changes to our security processes necessary to ensure an event like this does not happen again.