

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ISA maintained impressively high scores approximating its 5-year average in the categories of thought leadership, policy advocacy and best practice development. In all these categories the mode (most typical response) was a perfect 5/5. Mean scores for thought leadership and policy advocacy were also impressively high and in line with the 5-year average (4.79/5 for thought leadership and 4.88 for policy advocacy.) The best practice scores were at all time highs receiving perfect 5.0 ratings across all domains—largely reflecting the year’s work on the NACD-ISA Cyber Risk Oversight Handbook.

In all these three categories positive comments substantially exceeded critical comments. However, since many of the positive comments were quite similar, I have chosen to consolidate many of them and provide a slightly out of balance percentage of critical comments as ISA looks to improve event on the positive ratings. This rebalancing was not necessary in the fourth category – keeping ISA strong – as positive and critical comments from the board were largely equivalent in number

The major deficiency reflected in the 2025 survey was on the goal of keeping the ISA strong. For the first time in over a decade the ISA board rated performance overall below a 4 with a mode (most often) score in this category being 3.0 – compared to the 5.0 mode ratings on all other categories. The mean score of 4.2 was also significantly lower than the mean score in all other categories. The divergence in scoring may be in part to how different board members choose to define what “keeping ISA strong” meant to them. Several gave the ISA a score of 5.0 in this category focusing on the enhancements in staffing, while others focused on the overall reduction in membership.

THOUGHT LEADERSHIP SCORES

MEAN SCORE 4.79/5

MODE SCORE 5.0

MEDIAN SCORE 4.37

THOUGHT LEADERSHIP COMMENTS

“A key strength, bringing the board in as our secret sauce

Defiantly a 5 -- all the aspects –Handbook is key for us. We use it in our work with partners. Our work gets to the highest levels. Be good to get on RSA – TV opportunity is great

Based on comparison with other associations – ISA is a 10 on thought leadership by far more successful than other organizations we are in

We are focused on the right things; we are focused on what moves the needle

Look at the attention we get from the Congress—we have their attention which is a big signal of our success in tune with the topics is critical

I’m very impressed—especially with the past year or 2 identifying where we can make progress e.g. duplicative regulation

Great picking up on the Trump Administration

The right focus on who are the ones

Great guests at board meetings

Excellent, more could be done with more people

Couldn’t find a way to do better

Really good connections with WEF/EU

The TL is why I’m part of the ISA.

We are already doing a lot – there is a lot of noise but ISA cuts through

ISA really makes a difference

Excellent! NACD is why we are involved

Our board is very excited that we can show we are part of ISA’s work with NACD

We need to leverage the BSI version

We need more cross team communication

Maybe we need to engage other agencies – DOD/FBI/SEC and ONCD

WE need to revisit some of our goals – we don't have the hiring issues we did

We need to look at how we anchor in the book and come up with a top 10 list

Maybe get in with others e.g. S by SW Aspen—RSA is too big – anyone on the board have contacts to get us in with them?

Are people listening to our TL? What does success look like – the NACD success is the test

We need to expand the network exposed to ISA. ISA's is better than everyone else

POLICY ADVOCACY SCORES

MEAN SCORE. 4.88

MODE SCORE 5.0

MEDIAN SCORE 4.37

POLICY ADVOCACY COMMENTS

POLICY ADVOCACY

I gave is a 4.9. Its t would be a 5 but we need more balance – we try to be down the center –the politics can seem intractable; how can we bridge the gap and get us to a 5. We have made lots of progress

I don't know of another organization that does this as well as ISA.

Our GR team is always impressed with the meetings we get regularly

A great job, not just the meetings but the books and the blogs

Everything take together it's all excellent, but we don't want to be picking sides as the majority may flit in 27

Compared to other organizations we are in this is a 5 or whatever is the highest rank I can give – others just are dabbling in policy they don't have the steady dedicated effort as at ISA

Hard to say how it could be better – don't change!

Obviously fantastic access. Maybe we could do a pre-meeting –this is what we are going to do Need to be more flexible with priorities – we aren't seeing the workforce issue we did a few years ago – we need to be able to recalibrate

Don't know what else you can do

Salon dinners are great

Maybe more on Executive side targeting the Administration

ISA really makes a difference. Great team

We are on the cusp of breaking through with important issues despite the chaos

I talk to other CISOs, and they don't have the same opportunities ISA provides. WE are at the table, not the "policy person"

LC and staff insights are really helpful.

ISA is the top

We need to reform the website, when we do, we will go through the roof

Far exceeds expectations—we need to continue that focus staff wanting to meet with us shows effectiveness of our other tools – blogs meetings etc.

Very successful, assessed the landscape and carefully crafted a plan and we are succeeding with that plan

We are making progress on all our top policy issues.

Better? –how to get experts to dig deeper. Are there approaches beyond the board meetings maybe joint meetings with ISA staff

PROMOTING BEST PRACTICES SCORES

MEAN SCORE 5.0

MODE SCORE 5.0

MEDIAN SCORE 5.0

PROMOTING BEST PRACTICES COMMENTS

Biggest feather in the ISA cap is when ISA board members work with the NACD, and directors see that ISA is the source – worth the price of admission

High marks for the rigor in explaining the economic model for cybersecurity – there is a cost to participate as it requires time but it's worth the reward

We can see in our work the impact of the handbook—it gets the boards to ask the right questions

Like that we got away from the long narratives in this edition. It helps boards quickly get to the right issues – structured so the directors can get what they want.

I love the handbook – we have to push it better

How are we getting feedback, we need handbook stats to calibrate the impact

NACD participation is well received

The gold standard for ISA. Makes ISA unique cause it's not just technical

The challenge is the pace—we do a great job but hard to keep up to meet the challenge—maybe we can give constant updates via AI

ISA has been the trailblazer. Once CS was a novelty for the board and now it's a central issue –ISA has a lot to do with that

AI security is shifting so rapidly – do we need an interim update –maybe one next year?

Create a global desire to work with the ISA—is testament to the excellent work we do—especially the edited versions for EU/Germany and Japan

Need a more coordinated promotion program – maybe with 1631 Digital

MAINTAINING ISA SCORES

MEAN SCORE 4.2

MODE SCORE 3.0

MEDIAN SCORE 3.9

MAINTAINING ISA COMMENTSS

More concerned about this than ever before – we need to close on some new members

Keep going and follow the plan – NACD will hopefully help

We are focused on the right things – we need to work on continuity

Good addition of new talent

Need to figure out how to recruit – brainstorming at the board meeting

Like the monthly reports

This is not a typical board – different model, very proud to be part of it –great job

Other boards have very specific value proposition –narrower scope

Need to justify based on what ISA provides and people can't get elsewhere – like policy changes before others

We split costs between two levels – board should develop best practices for how to get dues approved –how are we selling ISA?

This is the area where we have the most work to do. David and Seamus bring value – need to plan what ISA will be in 5 years

Maybe the board should break up into groups of 3 and report back to the board

How do we get people to commit the time? It's a competition for mind-space

There really is nothing like ISA—although others have elements of it – I prefer a smaller group like ISA.

How can we take advantage of the group other than sending emails

Clearly the landscape has changed –maybe focus on non-US companies

PROMOTING BEST PRACTICES

Another strength – NACD Book is the prime example but also the blogs, the international