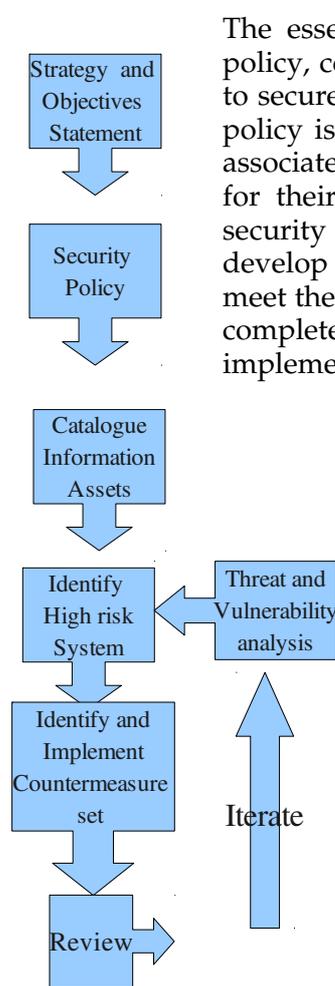




## Agile Security – An Introduction

Those responsible for information security in organisations need to respond quickly to the problems of increasing threats, more sophisticated exploits and greater diversity of vulnerabilities. This needs to be done against a background of significantly greater public awareness of information security and therefore pressures to prevent incidents that would damage the reputation and effectiveness of the organisation. This needs to be accomplished in an environment where appropriate technical skills are scarce and resources limited.

Cornwell Business Consultants' have developed a portfolio of methodologies [see Cornwell Lean / Agile Approaches] designed to deliver business solutions quickly, reliably and cost-effectively. Part of the portfolio is "Agile Security". It deploys best-practice security, compliant with the relevant standards framework, closing critical security gaps quickly and delivering continuously improving protection.



The essence to our approach is to set an organisation-wide security policy, covering all the aspects in ISO 27000 – so that it leads ultimately to secure information systems that can be accredited to ISO27001. The policy is designed not to be prescriptive but clearly defines the policy associated with each aspect of security and those individuals responsible for their delivery. Because there are a limited number of types of security strategies adopted by organisations, we have been able to develop a portfolio of security policy models which can be tailored to meet the needs of any organisation. In some clients we have delivered a complete security policy in a matter of days. We then go on to implement it.

The first implementation step is to identify those parts of the organisation at highest risk then, by using our scope restriction methods [see Cornwell Lean Agile - Scope Management] we define the systems that will be responsible for defending them. For each system a series of time boxed measures is implemented, each of which maximises the reduction in the overall risk profile.

As each countermeasure set is implemented, the risk profile is reviewed so that the next incremental countermeasure set can be selected. The risk profile takes account of new vulnerabilities and threats that have emerged.

Agile security relies on the application of best practice. It uses the resources available in a sustainable way – not insisting on overburdening individuals – knowing that the path to excellence is by steady, continuous application of good practice.

Complete security is not achievable, but significant reductions in risk can be realised by simple, low-cost measures. Cornwell has experience of steering many organisations through this process. Further details can be found in other Cornwell Publications : Agile Security and the SPF, Agile Security in Criminal Justice, Preparing a security policy for agile implementation, scoping systems using the VSM and Agile Accreditation to ISO 27000.