

Critical infrastructure protection, Italian point of view

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Modern western countries have developed a model of society characterized by a high quality of life, meaning that basic services are available to citizens to let them express their attitudes at best, and to satisfy their needs.. Examples of such services are energy provision, healthcare, transport, banking and finance. In the last years, dramatic experiences caused by natural or man-made disasters made urgent to understand the dependency of our society from those infrastructures that, if disrupted or destroyed, would seriously compromise our quality of life. Single sectors of critical infrastructures have far back developed criteria to protect their assets. For example, in the ICT sector various best practices and standards are available in order to assess systems and infrastructures security and to design appropriate security measures. Nevertheless, this is not sufficient to guarantee end users against service interruptions; two considerations must be done: - modern critical infrastructures are strictly inter-connected; consequently, a binding analysis of interconnections is mandatory in order to achieve an effective preview of cascading effects; - some critical infrastructure operators rely on insurance contracts in order to guarantee business continuity, regardless of the actual availability of the service; this approach does not provide any guarantee for end users in terms of service continuity. Based on these considerations, an intense activity in the international community has been undertaken. The USA, following the 9/11 events, deployed a detailed and organic national strategy for homeland protection, that entailed the creation of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). In July 2002 DHS released the first version of the National Strategy for Homeland Security, that was updated up to the last version in July 2007. One of the six critical mission areas identified in the strategy aims at protecting Critical Infrastructures and key assets. Within the EU, the Justice and Home Affairs (JHA) Council of June 2008 approved the text of the Directive on the identification and designation of European Critical Infrastructure and the assessment of the need to improve their protection. The approval of the Directive represents the final step of a normative path undertaken by the European Council of June 2004, asking the Commission to prepare a global strategy for the protection of Critical Infrastructures. The Directive lays out the measures established by the Commission in order to guarantee the correct operation of European Critical Infrastructures. In this presentation, after a brief introduction on the problem of Critical Infrastructures (CI) protection, a methodology of classification and analysis of CIs will be proposed. This methodology turns out to be useful to map the dependencies among different Critical Infrastructures, providing tools for the forecasting of cascading effects.