

STATE OF VERMONT
PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION

Case No. 19-0869-PET

Request of the Vermont Department of Public Service for a workshop regarding host-remote isolation	
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Order entered: 04/16/2019

ORDER OPENING INVESTIGATION AND REQUESTING COMMENTS ON SCHEDULE

I. INTRODUCTION

In this Order, the Vermont Public Utility Commission (“Commission”) opens an investigation, pursuant to 30 V.S.A. §§ 203 and 209, to examine and review host-remote isolation vulnerabilities in the wireline networks of Vermont telecommunications service providers and requests comments on a schedule for further proceedings.

II. PROCEDURAL HISTORY

On July 25, 2006, the Commission initiated a rulemaking proceeding at the request of the Vermont Enhanced 911 Board (“E-911 Board”) to address host-remote isolation vulnerabilities. This proceeding concluded in late 2007 with a draft of a rule, but no rule was ever formally proposed.

On January 9, 2019, in response to a public comment filed in Docket 8850, the Commission requested comments on the issue of host-remote isolation vulnerabilities, including a description of any steps being taken to address the issue and whether Commission involvement would be beneficial. The Vermont Department of Public Service (“Department”) and the E-911 Board both responded that no Commission involvement was required at that time and that Docket 8850 was not an appropriate proceeding in which to address the issue.

On March 27, 2019, the Department filed a request for a workshop regarding host-remote isolation.

III. DISCUSSION

Vermont’s wireline telephone networks include areas served by host-remote architectures that can become isolated in the event of an outage. If an outage occurs, callers within the

isolated area can call numbers within their local exchange but cannot reach numbers outside the local exchange, which may include 911. Vermont's wireline networks have included host-remote architectures and the associated isolation risks since the inception of Vermont's 911 system.¹

The Department, with the support of the E-911 Board, has asked the Commission to solicit comments and convene a workshop to develop a public record about host-remote isolation vulnerability issues, including the following topics:

- the identification of the current status, location, and impact of host-remote isolation vulnerabilities in Vermont wireline telephone networks; and
- the identification of potential solutions and corresponding costs for the resolution or mitigation of the identified host-remote isolation vulnerabilities.

The Department has offered to coordinate with other participants in developing an agenda for the workshop.

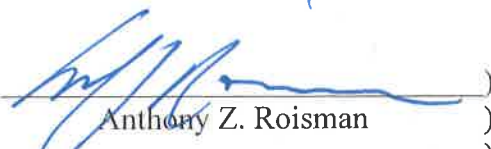
IV. ORDER

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED, ADJUDGED, AND DECREED by the Public Utility Commission ("Commission") of the State of Vermont that:

1. Pursuant to 30 V.S.A. §§ 203 and 209, an investigation is opened regarding the existence of and potential solutions to host-remote isolation vulnerability issues in the wireline networks of Vermont telecommunications service providers.
2. Interested parties should submit comments on an appropriate schedule for this proceeding, including at least one round of comments and one workshop, and an agenda of topics for discussion at the workshop by April 25, 2019.

¹ Exhibit A to Department's Request (Letter to June Tierney, Commissioner of Vermont Department of Public Service from Barbara M. Neal, Executive Director of the Vermont Enhanced 911 Board, Mar. 22, 2019).

Dated at Montpelier, Vermont, this 16th day of April, 2019.

 Anthony Z. Roisman	)	PUBLIC UTILITY
 Margaret Cheney	)	
 Sarah Hofmann	)	

OFFICE OF THE CLERK

Filed: April 16, 2019

Attest:


Clerk of the Commission

Notice to Readers: This decision is subject to revision of technical errors. Readers are requested to notify the Clerk of the Commission (by e-mail, telephone, or in writing) of any apparent errors, in order that any necessary corrections may be made. (E-mail address: puc.clerk@vermont.gov)

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