

Your browser is outdated, it will not render this page properly, please upgrade.

'State-sponsored' hackers targeted EirGrid electricity network in 'devious attack'

EirGrid was targeted by 'state sponsored' hackers. Stock photo: PA

Cathal McMahon

August 07 2017 01:30 AM



The company that manages the country's electricity grid was targeted by "state-sponsored" hackers, leaving its network exposed to a "devious attack".

The hackers, using IP addresses sourced in Ghana and Bulgaria, gained access to a Vodafone network used by Irish operator EirGrid in the UK, the Irish Independent can reveal.

Following the original attack in April hackers then compromised the routers used by EirGrid in Wales and Northern Ireland.

They did this by installing a virtual wire tap on the system so that they had access to all of unencrypted communications sent to and from the companies.

The breach was discovered last month, but sources say it is still not known if any malicious software was secreted onto EirGrid's control systems.

State-owned EirGrid manages and operates the electricity transmission grid across the island of Ireland. EirGrid moves wholesale power around the country. A breach of the system could result in power outages across the island.

Malware has previously been used in the Ukraine by suspected Russian hackers to cause major national power outages.

The Irish Independent has learned that the hack came to light after a tip-off from Vodafone and the National Cyber Security centre in the UK to EirGrid.

The original breach took place on April 20 and lasted just short of seven hours.

A source said that both Vodafone and the National Cyber Security Centre believed it was a "state-sponsored attack".

The breach of the Vodafone network allowed the hackers to create a type of wire tap known as Generic Routing Encapsulation (GRE) to tunnel into EirGrid's Vodafone router located in Shotton.

Household customer information was not stored on the EirGrid computers but information pertaining to commercial customers would have been transferred over the compromised network.


David Martin, spokesperson for EirGrid Group, said: "We are aware of the currently reported focus on energy companies and national infrastructure and wish to state that our computer systems have not been breached."

A spokesman for Vodafone said it did not comment on specific security incidents.

"In such cases we always work closely with the relevant authorities to investigate and take immediate actions to contain the issue and protect our customers," he said.


Irish Independent

Promoted Linksby @utbrain




Most Computer Owners Don't Know This Clever Security Trick (Do It Now)

Security Savers Online




Learning a new language this year? – This app gets you speaking in just 3 weeks

Babbel.com




Most Dangerous Selfies Ever Taken

Far and Wide




Ukrainian Billionaire Is Buyer of €200 Million French Riviera Mansion

Mansion Global



Rustic Mountain House With Ski-in, Ski-out Trail Access

Mansion Global



Learning A Language In 2020? - This App Is Used By Millions Of Language Learners

Babbel

Related Content

News
Exclusive: EirGrid targeted by 'state sponsored' hackers leaving networks exposed to 'devious attack'
Irish electricity transmission system operator EirGrid was targeted by "state sponsored" hackers leaving its network exposed to a "devious attack".

Independent.ie

Search entire site



- News
 - Irish News
 - World News
 - Local papers
 - Environment
 - Weather
 - Opinion
 - Letters
 - Editorial
 - Comment
 - Business
 - Brexit
 - Irish
 - World
 - Technology
- Personal Finance
 - Small Business
 - Farming
 - Jobs
- Commercial Property
- In The Workplace
- Sport
 - Rugby
 - GAA
 - Soccer
 - The Left Wing
 - The Throw In
 - Women's Sport
 - Golf
 - Horse Racing
 - Other Sports
- Life
 - Health & Wellbeing
 - Home & Garden
 - Family
 - Food & Drink
- Motoring
- Style
- Celebrity
- Fashion
- Beauty
- Sex & Relationships
- Voices
- Galleries
- Entertainment
 - Movies
 - Television
 - Music
 - Radio
 - Books
 - Theatre & Arts
- Games
- Festivals
- Banter
- Coffee Break
- Travel
 - Travel News
 - Reader Travel Awards
 - Ireland
 - Reviews
 - Walks
 - Europe
 - World/USA
 - Travel TV
 - Cruise
 - Ski
- Podcasts
 - Women in Tech
 - The Throw In
 - The Big Tech Show
 - Real Health Podcast
 - Going to College
 - Partners in Business
 - The Left Wing
 - The Floating Voter
- Video

Newsletters

Socials



- Sitemap
- Contact Us
- Terms & Conditions
- Privacy Statement
- Cookie Policy
- Paid-for content Policy
- Group Websites
- Advertise with Us