



## Network Security Information Exchange

### Issue Background

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Industry and Government coordinate through Network Security Information Exchanges (NSIEs) to voluntarily share sensitive information on threats to operations, administration, maintenance, and provisioning systems supporting the telecommunications infrastructure. Government NSIE members include departments and agencies that use national security and emergency preparedness (NS/EP) telecommunications services, represent law enforcement, or have information relating to network security threats and vulnerabilities. NSTAC NSIE representatives include subject matter experts who are engaged in prevention, detection, and/or investigation of telecommunications software penetrations or have security and investigative responsibilities. The NSTAC's Industry Executive Subcommittee (IES) approves NSTAC companies wishing to participate in the NSTAC NSIE. NSIE representatives periodically invite guests to attend meetings and observe the NSIEs in return for briefings on the guests' security-related activities.

### History of NSTAC Actions

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In April 1990, the Chairman of the National Security Council's Policy Coordinating Committee—National Security Telecommunications and Information Systems requested the Manager, National Communications System (NCS), identify what actions industry and Government should pursue to protect critical NS/EP telecommunications from the growing "hacker" threat. The Manager, NCS, subsequently requested that the NSTAC provide industry's perspective on the network security issue. NSTAC established the Network Security Task Force to identify a mechanism for security information exchange and produce a corresponding implementation plan. The NSTAC and the Manager, NCS, also established separate, but closely coordinated, NSIEs. In May 1991, the NSIE charters were finalized, and NSTAC companies and Government departments and agencies designated their NSIE representatives, chairmen, and vice-chairmen. The NSTAC and Government NSIEs held their first joint meeting in June 1991.

In 2002, the NSTAC and Government NSIEs examined security requirements for controlling access to the public switched network, with particular focus on the emerging next generation network. The NSIEs established a Security Requirements Working Group, which included members from a cross-section of telecommunications carriers and vendors. The Working Group developed an initial list of security requirements that would allow vendors, service providers, and the Federal Government to implement a secure telecommunications network management infrastructure. This initial list of security requirements was submitted as a contribution to the Alliance for Telecommunications Industry Solutions (ATIS) Committee T1—Telecommunications, T1M1.5 Working Group for consideration as a standard. Through partnership with ATIS and the continued participation of NSIE representatives and their companies throughout 2002 and 2003, the *Operations, Administration, Maintenance, and Provisioning Security Requirements for the Public Telecommunications Network: A Baseline of Security Requirements for the Management Plane* was published as an American National Standard (T1.276-2003) in July 2003.

### Recent NSTAC Activities

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In 2003, NSIE representatives worked closely with British Telecom to assist with the establishment of an NSIE-like entity in the United Kingdom. NSIE representatives also assisted Industry Canada in establishing a similar entity in Canada in 2005. The NSTAC and Government NSIEs continue to work with these global partners to share information and enhance network security.