

Contractor Terminated After Modifying the Postal Global Security Policy

In March 2007, Postal Service IT management contacted the United States Postal Service Office of Inspector General (OIG) regarding thousands of Postal Service workstations becoming inoperable due to unauthorized changes replicated across the Postal Service computer infrastructure. The unauthorized modification was made to the global security policy within the Postal Service's Active Directory computer security application, known as Global Policy Objects (GPO). The GPO provides uniform security policies for networked computers, computer applications, and computer users. Because of the unauthorized modifications, internal computer users were denied access to some applications, significantly disrupting business. Our Technical Investigations Division worked with the Postal Service Computer Incident Response Team and determined that a contractor working for the Information, Technology, Engineering, & Architecture group of the Postal Service unintentionally initiated the unauthorized GPO modification. The contractor knowingly provided a false statement to special agents during an interview with OIG special agents. In June 2007, postal management terminated the contractor, and his Postal Service computer network access was disabled. The U.S. Attorney's Office declined prosecution. The documented cost damages to the Postal Service were \$392,737.