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Description of document: California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) records re: Metcalf Sniper Incident on April 16, 2013, assault on the PG&E Metcalf Transmission Substation in Coyote, California, 2013-2014

Requested date: 11-July-2020

Release date: 23-July-2020

Posted date: 22-January-2024

Source of document: Public Record Act request
Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES)
Attention: Office of Legal Affairs (Bldg. E)
3650 Schriever Avenue
Mather, CA 95655
[Online Public Record Request Form](#)

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July 23, 2020

VIA EMAIL ONLY

Subject: Request for Public Records

This letter responds to your California Public Records Act request, received by the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) on July 13, 2020. You requested "a copy of each report on the Metcalf Sniper Incident on April 16, 2013."

Please see the attached responsive records, numbered "PRA_001-010." Exempt records were withheld in whole or in part pursuant to the California Public Records Act, including Government Code section 6254, subdivisions (f) and (k), and section 6255. Should you have any questions, please contact me at pra@caloes.ca.gov or (916) 212-0837.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "Blair".

Senior Counsel, Office of Legal Affairs
California Governor's Office of Emergency Services





California State Threat Assessment Center Bulletin *Critical Infrastructure and Key Resources*

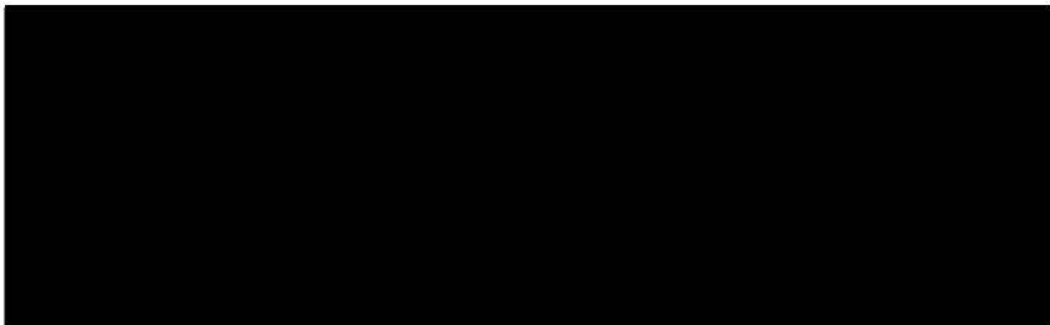
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(U//FOUO) Attacks [REDACTED] in California's Communications Sector



(U) ATTACK ON FIBER OPTIC LINES IN SAN JOSE [REDACTED]

(U//FOUO) [REDACTED] Unknown parties shot at and damaged a transformer at the Metcalf Road Pacific Gas and Electric^{USPER} (PG&E) substation, then used hand tools to sever nearby fiber optic cables, disrupting local communications, including 911 services.



Figure 1 – (U) Damaged transformer at Metcalf Substation

Source: San Francisco Chronicle

(U//FOUO) [REDACTED] The substation and cables are located [REDACTED]

(U) Source Summary and Confidence Level Statements

(U) We have high confidence in our judgments based on the nature of our sources, which were predominantly from reliable media outlets, telecommunications vendors, and official law enforcement reporting. Full information was not available on either incident due to the San Jose case being the subject of an ongoing investigation, and the lack of available first-hand reporting regarding the Egyptian case. However, our judgments are based on the basic nature of each attack, and we do not believe additional information would significantly alter our conclusions.

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approximately one mile from the nearest residential neighborhood in a rural area located off a freeway, and neither asset had on-site security or staff present during the attacks. [REDACTED]

- (U//LES) On 18 April 2013, unknown actors breached a fence at the PG&E electrical substation located near Metcalf Road in San Jose. According to a Northern California Regional Intelligence Center (NCRIC) notification, the attackers breached the fence at the facility, and then used a rifle to shoot at and damage five transformers (see Figure 1).² Immediately prior to the attack, telecommunications personnel noticed a disruption in the Santa Clara County 911 system, which also disrupted AT&T^{USPER} phone communications in the area. [REDACTED]



Figure 2 – Map location of PG&E substation damaged on 18 April 2013.

Source: Google

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(U//FOUO) [REDACTED]

(U) An incident similar to the one in April 2013 occurred in April 2009 when unknown persons cut ten Verizon^{USPER} underground cables at four locations in south San Jose. The outage affected emergency response networks, internet connections, phone services, and ATMs in Santa Clara, San Benito and Santa Cruz counties.

(U//FOUO) [REDACTED]

(U) ATTEMPT TO SABOTAGE UNDERSEA FIBER-OPTIC CABLE IN EGYPT

(U//FOUO) [REDACTED]

- (U) On 27 March 2013, the Egyptian navy captured three as-yet unidentified men who were cutting the SMW-4 underwater fiber-optic cable at a cable landing in Alexandria.⁵ According to pictures provided by naval officials, the men were equipped with SCUBA equipment and possibly hand tools for cutting the cable's insulation. The SMW-4 cable connects internet users in Europe, Africa, and Asia, stretching from France to Malaysia through the Mediterranean, the Arabian Sea, and the Indian Ocean.⁶ The damaged cable caused a drop in internet speed in Egypt.⁷ A map of the affected cable is below.

(U//FOUO) [REDACTED]

(U) Dry Plant

(U) According to DHS, a dry plant is a building co-located at a cable landing site containing electrical, switching, signal amplification, and routing equipment. Dry plants serve as a transfer point for intercontinental and domestic communications networks.

(U//FOUO) [REDACTED]

^a (U) Cable landing stations contain operations equipment for powering up underwater repeaters and amplifiers. Cable termination stations, in contrast, are where cables physically connect to land-based networks.

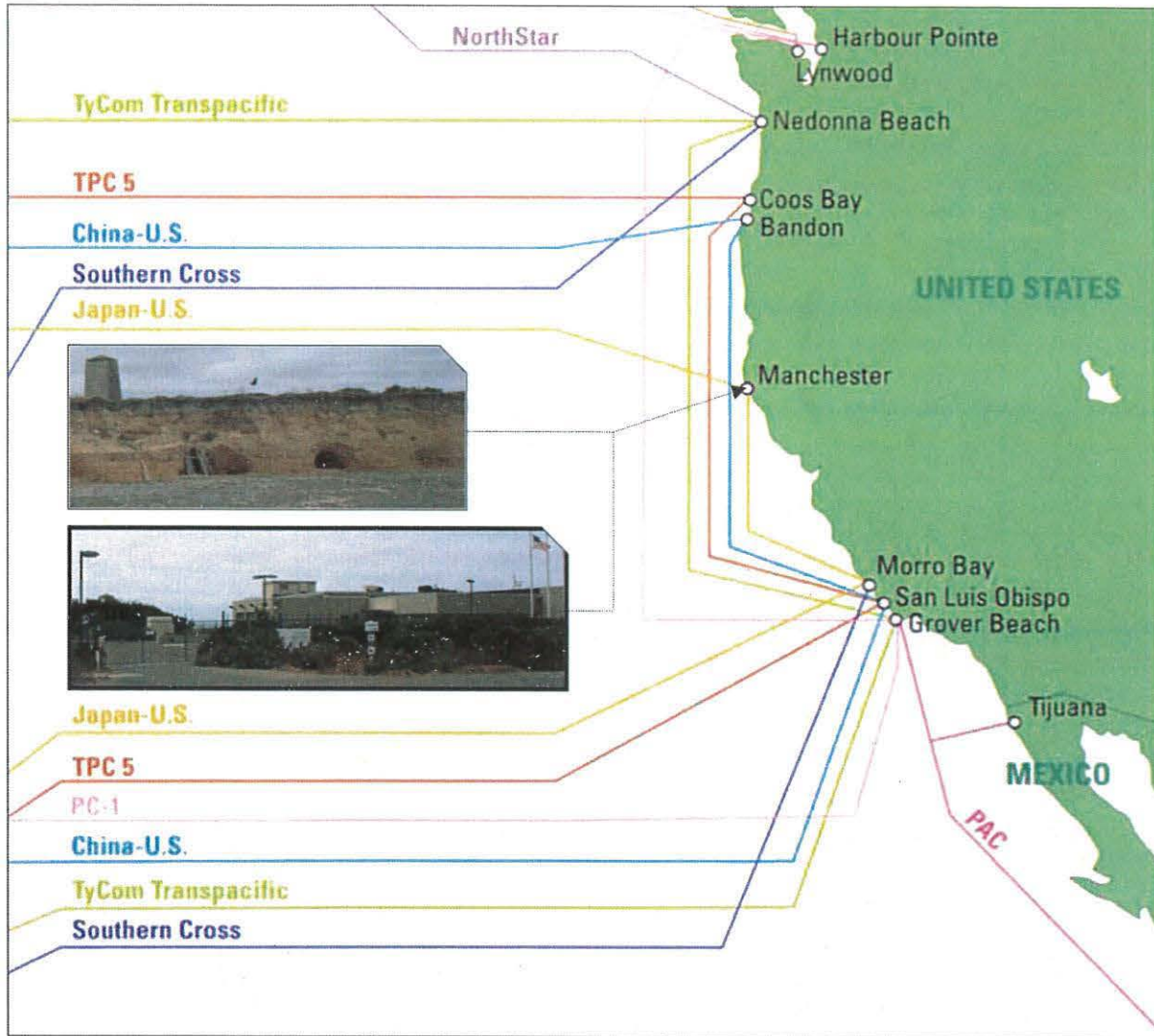


Figure 3 – (U) Map showing cable landing points in California.

(U) There are 12 cable landing points in California with some sites co-located at the same facility. Note: The Monterey Bay Aquarium Research Institute^{USPER} cable is not on this map, as it is a non-commercial scientific cable.⁹

(U) Inset: Cable entry sites and dry plant at Pont Arena Cable Station near Manchester, CA. Entry to the dry plant is restricted; however access to the beach is not. Dry plant access control measures include fencing, card readers, and security cameras.¹⁰

(U) Sources: TeleGeography and Telephone Central Offices

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(U) ADMINISTRATIVE NOTE

(U) For comments or questions related to the content or dissemination of this document, please contact the STAC at (916) 874-1100 or STAC@calema.ca.gov.

(U) TRACKED BY

(U) HSEC-1.6.2.4, HSEC-7.6.2.4

(U) FEEDBACK

(U) The STAC encourages your feedback using the survey found at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/VG5GZ2N>

(U) ENDNOTES

¹ (U) Website; Vivek Alwayn; "Fiber-Optic Technologies"; posted 23 April 2004; <http://www.ciscopress.com/articles/article.asp?p=170740&seqNum=4>; accessed on 30 May 2013. Cisco is a U.S.-based telecommunications provider that designs, manufactures, and sells networking equipment.

² (U) Online Newspaper Article; No Author Listed; *CBS News*; "Vandalism At San Jose PG&E Substation Called 'Sabotage'"; 16 April 2013; <http://sanfrancisco.cbslocal.com/2013/04/16/gunshots-cause-oil-spill-at-san-jose-pge-substation/>; accessed on 23 April 2013.

⁴ (U) Online Newspaper Article; Nanette Asimov, Ryan Kim, and Kevin Fagan; *San Francisco Chronicle*; "Sabotage Attacks Knock Out Phone Service"; 10 April 2009; <http://www.sfgate.com/bayarea/article/Sabotage-attacks-knock-out-phone-service-3245380.php>; accessed on 22 May 2013.

⁵ (U) Online Newspaper Article; No Author Listed; *Associated Press*; "Egypt: Naval Forces Capture Three Divers Trying to Cut Undersea Internet Cable"; 27 March 2013; http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle_east/egypt-naval-forces-capture-3-scuba-divers-trying-to-sabotage-undersea-internet-cable/2013/03/27/dd2975ec-9725-11e2-a976-7eb906f9ed9b_story.html; accessed on 28 March 2013.

⁶ (U) Internet Site; Telegeography; "Submarine Cable Map"; 26 March 2013; <http://www.submarinecablemap.com/>; accessed on 28 March 2013.

⁷ (U) Online Newspaper Article; No Author Listed; BBC; "Egypt Arrests as Undersea Internet Cable Cut Off Alexandria"; 27 March 2013; <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-21963100>; accessed on 18 April 2013.

⁹ (U) Website; TeleGeography; "2012 Submarine Cable Map"; 30 May 2013; <http://www.submarinecablemap.com/>; accessed on 30 May 2013. TeleGeography is a U.S.-based telecommunications market research and consulting firm.

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¹⁰ (U) Website; Telephone Central Offices; "Point Arena Cable Station"; posting date unknown; <http://www.thecentraloffice.com/Microwave/NMW/PARNCA/PARNCA01.htm>; accessed on 25 April 2013. Telephone Central Offices is a website operated by telecommunications equipment enthusiasts.



CALIFORNIA STATE THREAT ASSESSMENT CENTER

NOTE – *CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE AND KEY RESOURCES*

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(U) Fiber Optic Lines Cut in San Jose, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

- [REDACTED]

- [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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- (U//FOUO) SnowCrest^{USPER}, an Internet provider in Siskiyou County, stated on their Facebook^{USPER} page that their Internet and phone services were down on 7 July due to 3 fiber optic cables being cut "elsewhere in California".¹ The company's fiber backbone is CenturyLink, and this outage may be related to the San Jose incident. Snowcrest also experienced an outage on 13 February due to a cut in a fiber-optic line between Sacramento and Yuba City.²

(U//FOUO) There have been at least three similar incidents in California since 2011.

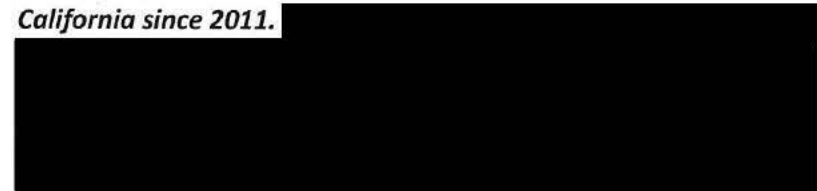
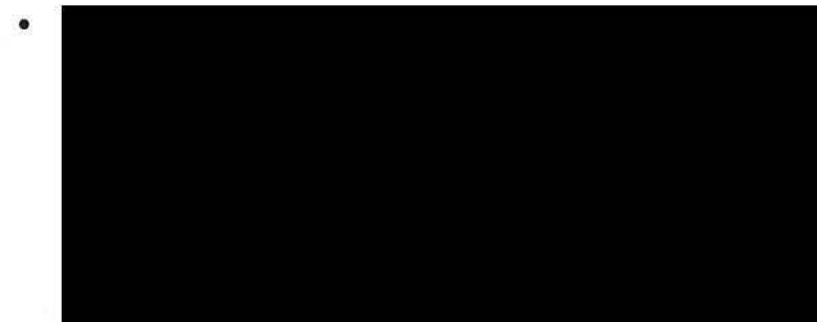
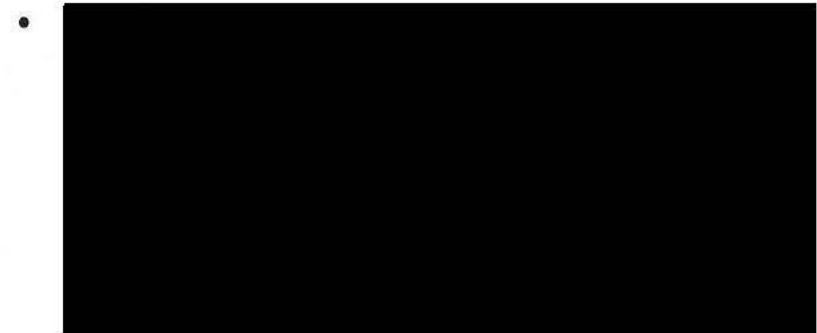


Figure 4 – (U) Collapsed public safety communications tower near San Ramon, CA (SOURCE: KTVU^{USPER})



Figure 4 – (U) Repair of severed fiber optic lines in Del Mar, CA (SOURCE: NBC News)



- (U) On 14 June 2012, unidentified subjects cut two AT&T^{USPER} underground fiber optic cables in Del Mar, CA. The attack led to an Internet cable television and landline phone service disruption across San Diego County. According to AT&T, the perpetrators had knowledge of the system and intended to disrupt service rather than steal equipment.⁵



Figure 4 – (U) Public safety communication sites in San Francisco, CA affected in July 2012 incident (SOURCE: Google^{USPER} Maps)

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- (U) On 9 April 2009, unknown parties severed ten fiber-optic communication lines in four underground vaults across San Jose, CA, disabling landline, cellular, and Internet service across Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, and San Benito Counties. Four lines in south San Jose were first cut, followed by two more at a location two miles away. Approximately two hours later, attackers cut four additional cables located in two locations in San Carlos.⁶ According to local law enforcement officials, a special tool was required to open each vault, none of which were readily visible from the street.⁷



- (U//LES) On 16 April 2013, unknown actors damaged or destroyed multiple transformers at the Pacific Gas and Electric^{USPER} electrical substation located near Metcalf Road in San Jose. According to a NCRIC notification, immediately prior to the attack, telecommunications personnel noticed a disruption in the Santa Clara County 911 system, which also disrupted AT&T phone communications in the area.



(U) ADMINISTRATIVE NOTE

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(U) TRACKED BY

(U) HSEC-1.6.2.5

(U) FEEDBACK

(U) The STAC encourages your feedback using the survey found at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/XXXXXX>.

(U) ENDNOTES

¹ (U) Website; "SnowCrest Inc. – Mount Shasta, CA – Internet/Software | Facebook"; 7 July 2014; <https://www.facebook.com/pages/SnowCrest-Inc/178644392218862>; accessed on 8 July 2014.

² (U) Online Newspaper Article; No Author Listed; *Redding Record Searchlight*; "UPDATED: Snowcrest says Internet service is back"; 7 July 2014; <http://www.redding.com/news/local-news/cut-cables-interrupt-internet-provider-snowcrests-services>; accessed on 8 July 2014.

⁵ (U) Online Newspaper Article; Tony Shin and Monica Garske; *NBC News*; "AT&T Cables Vandalized, \$250,000 Reward Offered for Information"; 15 June 2012; <http://www.nbcsandiego.com/news/local/ATT-Cables-Cut-Vandalized-250000-Reward-Offered-159155295.html>; accessed on 18 December 2013.

⁶ (U) Online Newspaper Article; Nanette Asimov, Ryan Kim and Kevin Fagan; *San Francisco Chronicle*; "Sabotage attacks knock out phone service"; 10 April 2009; http://articles.sfgate.com/2009-04-10/news/17191717_1_cables-debit-cards-vandals; accessed on 5 December 2011.

⁷ (U) Online Newspaper Article; Lori Preuitt; *NBC News*; "\$250K Reward Out for Vandals Who Cut AT&T Lines"; 10 April 2009; <http://www.nbcbayarea.com/news/local/South-Bay-Dead-Zone.html>; accessed on 5 December 2011.

⁸ (U) Online Newspaper Article; No Author Listed; *CBS News*; "Vandalism At San Jose PG&E Substation Called 'Sabotage'"; 16 April 2013; <http://sanfrancisco.cbslocal.com/2013/04/16/gunshots-cause-oil-spill-at-san-jose-pge-substation>; accessed on 14 July 2014.

¹⁰ (U) Online Newspaper Article; Nanette Asimov, Ryan Kim, and Kevin Fagan; *San Francisco Chronicle*; "Sabotage Attacks Knock Out Phone Service"; 10 April 2009; <http://www.sfgate.com/bayarea/article/Sabotage-attacks-knock-out-phone-service-3245380.php>; accessed on 14 July 2014.