

Digital Services

Wireless Access Points and Security Assessments

What: Through increased visibility of IT assets and collaboration, ADS has identified Wireless Access Points (WAPs) supporting most state agencies and departments that are currently end of service or end of life and are creating security risks, potential failure, and long-term technical debt for the State of Vermont. These points of entry need to be updated to ensure the reliability of our network. In conjunction with our partners, we have identified 164 WAPs that are past end of software support and represent a security vulnerability. All 436 WAPs will reach end of software support in 2020, and all 5 Wireless LAN Controllers (controls the core wireless infrastructure) will reach end of software support in 2019.

In addition to the infrastructure vulnerabilities, ADS is recommending a baseline security assessment and a series of activities to represent a holistic compromise assessment. These assessments allow for ADS to proactively identify suspicious activity within the environments, assess host and network-based technology to identify systems with suspicious behavior and to pinpoint other areas of concern within the network.

Why:

End of Service and End of Life IT equipment vulnerabilities are real and are grounded in numerous recent examples of digital exploitation, such as Equifax, Yahoo, Uber, and others. It's our responsibility to protect our systems and data from unauthorized access. By investing now in replacing our outdated equipment, the State will be in a stronger position to protect our data and provide higher network reliability for our workforce. When core IT infrastructure fails, we no longer have the ability to work online and provide services to Vermonters. Now, more than ever, we are dependent on being connected and need our network to connect day to day business.

For our comprehensive approach to assessing our security posture, these activities will allow for ADS to not only provide for immediate corrective actions for any recommendations, but to provide a level of assurance that malicious actors are not present within the State of Vermont infrastructure. This is a key task for prioritizing future cybersecurity roadmap actions and beginning to engage with brokers for cyber/data breach insurance requirements.

How:

The Agency of Digital Services is asking for \$500,000.00 of one-time money to replace the deficient wireless infrastructure items and perform these security assessments within the State of Vermont.

Definitions:

End of service means that technical support and other types of support services are no longer available and customers in need are charged premium prices for any service required. End of life products has been deemed by a manufacturer to have reached the end of its "useful lifespan." After this date the manufacturer will no longer be marketing, sustaining and (in most cases) selling the product in question – making replacement parts and other types of sustainment impractical.

###