

Howard County Emergency Services Crippled by Telephony Denial of Service (TDoS) Attacks



TDoS

Challenge

Howard County was hit by Telephony Denial of Service (TDoS) attacks occurring over the course of an otherwise typical weekend. The flood of robocalls started on a Friday night on Howard County's administrative phone lines. The 35,000 malicious calls overwhelmed their administrative phone lines and shut down the county's public-safety answering points (PSAPs). The TDoS attack crippled Howard County's PSAP call centers receiving emergency calls for police, fire brigade, or ambulance service.

Background

Howard County is located in the central part of Maryland and is part of the greater Washington, D.C. metropolitan area. As of the 2010 census, Howard County's population was 287,085. The county government employs over 3,300 people.

Howard County is home to several U.S. federal agencies including the Federal Communications Commission, the Social Security Administration, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, and the U.S. Department of Labor.

Approach

SecureLogix presented a quote and with a verbal approval from Howard County, deployed its Call Defense™ solution the following Tuesday, only four days after the attack started. The call security platform detected the TDoS attack came from a Palestinian group calling from Gaza.

Result

During the original attack the perpetrators made no ransom demands, but continued to call and flood Howard County phone numbers and cripple public PSAP operations throughout the weekend. After deployment of the SecureLogix® Call Defense System, Howard County immediately began blocking the calls from the Palestinian group and fully restored its PSAP operations and emergency 911 services.

Once the international criminal group realized its calls were blocked, they appeared to shift their TDoS attacks to neighboring counties, overwhelming their administrative phones and impacting their 911 response. These county governments also reached out to SecureLogix for the same solution and have since become protected against future TDoS and other call attacks.

Solution

CALL DEFENSE™
system

CALL SECURE™
managed service



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