

CS329E: Elements of Security

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Source: “Report Calls for Better Backstops to Protect Power Grid from Cyberattacks,” The New York Times, March 2, 2014. <http://nyti.ms/1fAJGj3>.

Relevance: Calls for better defense of U.S. critical infrastructure in the face of potential cyberattacks.

Synopsis: The U.S. Government is not well prepared to counter the threat of cyberattacks on critical infrastructure, according to a report by leading experts. Industries are hampered by the current federal rules, and unwilling to share information on cyberattacks and cyber vulnerabilities. Disclosing vulnerabilities may lead to fines or to being hacked, so utilities have little incentive to do so. The report recommends a better management approach to the problem, including the establishment of an oversight organization tasked with peer-to-peer audits and disseminating best practices.

Questions:

1. What impediments does industry face in protecting critical infrastructure?
2. Why might public utility commissioners be unable to determine which cybersecurity investments are prudent or necessary?