

# National Infrastructure Advisory Council

February 26, 2004

The Honorable George W. Bush  
President of the United States  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20502

Dear Mr. President:


We are pleased to submit the final report and recommendations of the National Infrastructure Advisory Council's (NIAC) study to develop guidelines and recommendations for disclosing vulnerabilities in networked information systems. The NIAC would like to credit and thank co-chairs John T. Chambers, President and CEO, Cisco Systems, Inc. and Vice Chairman, NIAC, and John W. Thompson, Chairman and CEO, Symantec Corporation, and all the members of their study group and external reviewers, for their diligence and dedicated efforts.

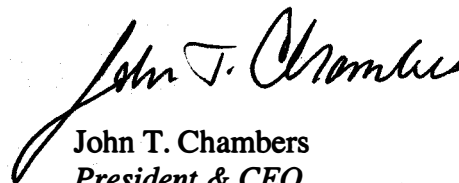
Vulnerabilities in technology vital to interconnected, critical infrastructure operations represent a threat to both national and economic security. Managing these vulnerabilities has become a critical component of customer care and protecting citizens. There are no standards or broad agreements among stakeholders regarding how, when, and to whom to disclose vulnerabilities. Unfortunately, these inconsistencies can lead to ineffective vulnerability management and put critical infrastructure at unnecessary risk.

After studying the complex issue of vulnerability disclosure, the NIAC has drawn six conclusions, which are described in the attached summary. The report also includes comprehensive guidelines for all stakeholders in the vulnerability disclosure process. Following these guidelines will bring consistency and efficiency to a process that has been fraught with misunderstanding and disagreement. Finally, the report makes seven recommendations to the President to direct appropriate departments and agencies involved in any aspect of managing software vulnerabilities.

Mr. President, on behalf of our fellow NIAC members, thank you for the opportunity to serve our Country through participation in this Council.

Sincerely,

  
Richard K. Davidson  
Chairman, President and CEO  
Union Pacific Corporation  
Chairman, NIAC

  
John T. Chambers  
President & CEO  
Cisco Systems, Inc.  
Vice Chairman, NIAC

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Attachment: Summary of Recommendations – Vulnerability Disclosure Framework:  
Final Report and Recommendations By The Council January 13, 2004.

cc: The Honorable Thomas Ridge, Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security