

## Announcement

### 13<sup>th</sup> Annual GridSecCon Highlights AI and Emerging Technology, Names Assante Award Recipients; Manny Cancel Receives Lifetime Achievement Award

October 25, 2025

**MINNEAPOLIS** – Cyber and physical security, AI and emerging technology, and [GridEx](#) were the key topics at the 13<sup>th</sup> annual grid security conference, GridSecCon, hosted by NERC, the Electricity Information Sharing and Analysis Center (E-ISAC) and the Midwest Reliability Organization (MRO). Approximately 700 security experts representing a cross-section of industry and government partners from across North America attended the sold-out, three-day conference in Minneapolis. During the event, participants heard from keynote speakers Sunny Wescott, chief meteorologist, Cybersecurity Infrastructure and Security Agency, and Shaun Marion, chief security officer, Xcel Energy.

Manny Cancel, E-ISAC CEO and NERC senior vice president, welcomed attendees and speakers to the conference and acknowledged the [E-ISAC's 25th Anniversary](#). “We’ve come a long way over the last 25 years, working across the sector with all of you, to meet the needs of a constantly changing threat landscape as we strengthen our collective defense,” said Cancel.

Sara Patrick, MRO president and CEO and GridSecCon co-host, delivered a keynote welcoming guests to Minnesota, drawing attention to how grid security requires the ability to move forward boldly and acknowledging that the rising challenges must be met with innovation and collaboration. “Our shared goal is to enhance the reliability and security of our grid. With your expertise and dedication, I am confident we will make significant strides,” said Patrick.

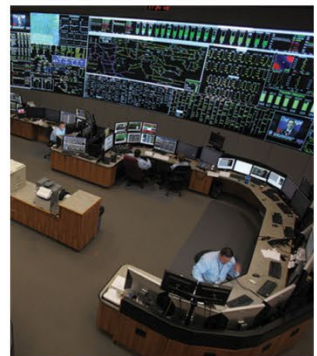
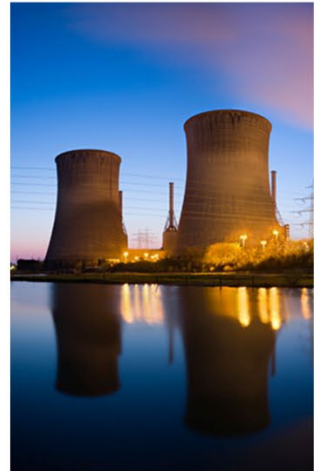
In addition to keynotes, GridSecCon 2024 included 36 breakout sessions that provided the opportunity to have more in-depth discussions on topics such as current cyber and physical threats, violent extremists and software supply chain security. Participants also received a preview of the grid security exercise, GridEx VIII, which will take place on November 18–19, 2025. Prior to the start of the conference, participants attended training sessions that covered a range of topics, including cyber response training and approaches to building a threat intelligence program.

During the conference, Cancel announced the recipients of the 2024 E-ISAC Electricity

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Security Service Award in honor of Michael J. Assante:

- Michele Guido, director of Strategic Security Policy, Southern Company
- Carter Manucy, director of Cybersecurity, National Rural Electric Cooperative Association

The award is named after Michael Assante, who led the establishment of the E-ISAC in 1999. It recognizes individuals or teams that have made significant contributions to the North American electric industry and who exemplify Assante's ability to inspire, innovate and care for the electric community.

At the conclusion of the conference, NERC President and CEO Jim Robb presented Cancel, who is retiring in 2025, with a Lifetime Achievement Award. In his presentation, Robb said of Cancel, "Over the past four years, he has refocused the organization around a core set of priorities, strengthened the E-ISAC team and built trust and credibility with the Member Executive Committee, the Electricity Subsector Coordinating Council, other critical infrastructure ISACs, and federal and provincial governments as well as the entire electric industry and security community."

Cancel concluded the conference by thanking participants and event sponsors and urging attendees to put the information learned and the relationships made during the conference into action.

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*Electricity is a key component of the fabric of modern society and NERC, as the Electric Reliability Organization, serves to strengthen that fabric. The vision for the ERO Enterprise, which is comprised of NERC and the six Regional Entities, is a highly reliable and secure North American bulk power system. Our mission is to assure the effective and efficient reduction of risks to the reliability and security of the grid.*