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Announcement

11th Annual Grid Security Conference Highlights Planning and Preparedness, Names Michael J. Assante Security Service Award Recipient

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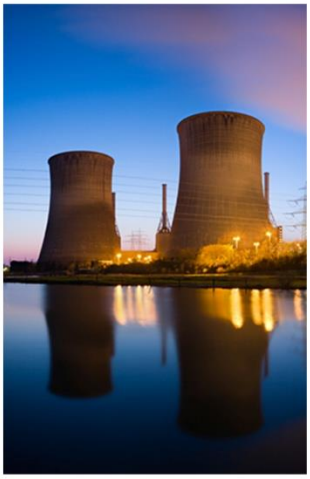
WASHINGTON, D.C. – More than 750 security experts from across North America participated in the 11th annual security conference, GridSecCon, which took place this week. Hosted by NERC, the Electricity Information Sharing and Analysis Center (E-ISAC) and ReliabilityFirst, the three-day conference focused on the current grid security environment and grid security planning and preparedness. Conference participants represented a cross-section of industry and government partners in North America, who gathered to attend training sessions and to share information that included best practices and lessons learned.

Jim Robb, NERC president and chief executive officer (CEO), opened the conference by recognizing industry and government partners in the United States and Canada who have come together to address the challenges presented by the evolving cyber and physical security threat landscape.

"Events like this, which help industry plan and prepare for contingencies through training, information sharing, and lessons learned, are so valuable and it's clear from the number of registrants this year that cyber and physical security remain a top priority for industry's reliability efforts," Robb said.

Keynote speakers during the conference were:

- Tim Gallagher, president and CEO, ReliabilityFirst
- Joanna Burkey, chief information security officer, HP Inc.
- Puesh Kumar, director, Office of Cybersecurity, Energy Security, and Emergency Response, U.S. Department of Energy
- Nitin Natarajan, deputy director, Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency, U.S. Department of Homeland Security
- Lesley Gallinger, president and CEO of Ontario's Independent Electricity System Operator.



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Gallagher focused his keynote remarks on observations from the ReliabilityFirst footprint. “When we find deficiencies or issues, they are primarily human and organizational in nature rather than technological,” said Gallagher who added that entities need to focus on self-awareness, self-assessment and constant vigilance to mitigate these issues. “Remember, we have to be right all the time while our adversaries have to be right only once. Let’s work together so we don’t make it easy for them.”

During the conference, breakout sessions focused on threat analysis, human performance, cyber security and supplier diversity, domestic violence extremists, personal and organizational resilience, and a look to next year’s grid security exercise, GridEx VII. Prior to the start of the conference, participants attended a day of training sessions covering a range of topics, including incident response training, physical security tools and CyOTE practitioner training.

At the close of the conference, Manny Cancel, senior vice president of NERC and CEO of the E-ISAC, announced Tony Eddleman, director of NERC Reliability Compliance at Nebraska Public Power District, as the winner of the 2022 E-ISAC Electricity Security Service Award in honor of Michael J. Assante. Eddleman received multiple nominations recognizing his commitment to excellence and his dedication to the industry and work ethic.

“Tony’s passion for and commitment to security and reliability are truly noteworthy and much-needed traits in our industry and we are delighted to recognize him with this award,” Cancel said.

Cancel concluded the two-day conference by thanking the trainers, keynote speakers, panelists, attendees and sponsors. “Cyber and physical security are an ever-evolving risk to our nation’s critical infrastructure and I can assure you all that NERC and the E-ISAC remain committed to working with members, industry and government partners to assure the reliability and security of the North American grid.”

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