Incident Report - 2018-08-02  
Incident #2018-261  
*PeopleSoft Production Sites Unavailable*

**Summary**

As part of routine maintenance for IT Services (ITS) systems, the ITS Systems team made a request of the ITS Networks team to remove several firewall and NAT\(^1\) rules. These rules were associated with the three production PeopleSoft environments: Campus Solutions (CS, which includes SOLUS); Human Resources (HR); and Finance (FN).

This request was inadvertently written in an ambiguous fashion that could be interpreted in two ways. This misunderstanding resulted in the removal of different firewall and NAT rules than those intended by the Systems team.

Removal of the incorrect firewall and NAT rules resulted in an outage for all production PeopleSoft environments. The error was identified, and by re-implementing the removed firewall rules, service was restored 30 minutes after the outage began.

**Impact**

End users of production PeopleSoft environments experienced a 30-minute service interruption.

**Root Cause**

An ambiguous communication and its misinterpretation resulted in the removal of different sets of firewall and NAT rules than intended.

**Resolution**

Service was restored when the rules were re-implemented.

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\(^1\) Network Address Translation (NAT) is the method by which a group of IP addresses is translated to a different set of IP addresses that are internal to an institution.
Communications (Internal)

The PeopleSoft Database team received notification that CS, HR, and FN users could not access the production environments. The PS Database team alerted the Networks team of the disruption. The two groups and the Systems team worked to identify and resolve the root cause.

Communications (External)

An ITS Notification was posted:

Multiple PeopleSoft Production sites are currently unavailable, including CSPRD, FNPRD, and HRPRD. ITS is currently investigating, and working to resolve the issue. An update to this notice will be posted when the sites become available again.

The notification was updated to communicate the resolution of the problem.

Lessons Learned

1. When removing firewall rules, first disable the rules. After 30 minutes of no reported outages, they can be permanently removed. This will assist in quick recovery if any error is made.
2. Multiple individuals should review iTrack requests to flag any ambiguity in language, or other potential problems. If a request is ambiguous, it will go back to the originator for clarification. Once a request has been reviewed and signed off on as a team, the work can proceed.
3. Any request to remove rules related to the PeopleSoft environment must be undertaken with additional caution.

Action Items

Procedural changes will put into effect items outlined in the Lessons Learned section.