

Snoddon, Michael AEST:EX

From: Snoddon, Michael AEST:EX
Sent: May 3, 2021 5:51 PM
To: 'Saad Shoaib'
Cc: Eshana Bhangu; Hannah, Jeff AEST:EX
Subject: RE: StudentAidBC Check-up

Hi Saad,

Thanks for your email. Here is the most up to date information that has been circulated to the media and through StudentAidBC on Twitter.

- The Ministry of Advanced Education & Skills Training and the Office of the Chief Information Officer is aware of this issue and is investigating.
- At this time, we are not aware of any personal data being compromised.
- We have taken immediate steps to temporarily shut down affected websites while we work with our IT staff to resolve the issue.
- StudentAidBC understands the concerns of the students needing to access their information, and application status – they are working to ensure the system is safe and secure before opening it back up for students.
- If students require access to urgent account information, they may contact StudentAidBC directly @ 1-800-561-1818 or via email studentaidbc@gov.bc.ca

As soon as I receive more updates, we will be sure to pass them along.

Thanks,

Michael

Michael Snoddon

Senior Ministerial Advisor
Ministry of Advanced Education & Skills Training
email: Michael.Snoddon@gov.bc.ca

From: Saad Shoaib <SaadShoaib@ams.ubc.ca>
Sent: May 3, 2021 5:33 PM
To: Snoddon, Michael AEST:EX <Michael.Snoddon@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: Eshana Bhangu <EshanaBhangu@ams.ubc.ca>
Subject: StudentAidBC Check-up

[EXTERNAL] This email came from an external source. Only open attachments or links that you are expecting from a known sender.

Hi Michael,

I hope you're doing well.

Last night, it came to our attention that the studentaid.bc.ca website faced a cyber-attack and is currently down. We just wanted to check-in and see if everything is okay in terms of student data and personal information.

Please let us know at your soonest convenience. Additionally, let us know if there is absolutely anything that we can do to help.

Warmly,

Saad Shoaib (he/him)

Vice-President External Affairs

AMS Student Society of UBC Vancouver

T 604 822 2050 F 604 822 9019

AMS Student Society of UBC Vancouver | ams.ubc.ca

On the unceded territory of [xʷməθkʷəy̓əm](#) (Musqueam) Peoples



Snoddon, Michael AEST:EX

From: Snoddon, Michael AEST:EX
Sent: May 3, 2021 12:06 PM
To: Berndt, Eric GCPE:EX
Subject: RE: AEST Follow-up Media Request: AEST student aid website vandalism

Yup good!

From: Berndt, Eric GCPE:EX <Eric.Berndt@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: May 3, 2021 12:05 PM
To: Snoddon, Michael AEST:EX <Michael.Snoddon@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: FW: AEST Follow-up Media Request: AEST student aid website vandalism

Bob had a follow up: Proposed, Approved by OCIO.

The impacted sites were Student Aid BC, LearnLiveBc.ca and the Private Training institution website. Yes, the RCMP and OIPC have been notified.

Does it work for you?

Eric

From: Jennifer Fernandes <Jennifer.Fernandes@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: May 3, 2021 10:40 AM
To: Berndt, Eric GCPE:EX <Eric.Berndt@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: AEST Follow-up Media Request: AEST student aid website vandalism

Reporter

Bob Mackin, Reporter
The Breaker News
bob@thebreaker.news
604-982-9130 c: 604-724-5604

Deadline ASAP

Request

Can you please clarify which websites were affected and temporarily shut down?
Have AVED and OCIO contacted the OIPC and RCMP?

Recommendation

Background

This is a follow-up to a media request from May 3, 2021.

REQUEST:

What is the status of the StudentAid BC website? Has any ransom been paid to the hackers?
Has the Ministry contacted the OIPC and RCMP?

RESPONSE:

Provided Statement

The Ministry of Advanced Education & Skills Training and the Office of the Chief Information Officer is aware of this issue and is investigating. At this time, we are not aware of any personal data being compromised. We have taken immediate steps to mitigate any further exposure. This includes temporarily shutting down affected websites while we work with our IT staff to resolve the issue.

Snoddon, Michael AEST:EX

From: Snoddon, Michael AEST:EX
Sent: May 3, 2021 10:43 AM
To: May, Ed LASS:EX; Field, Maddie LASS:EX; Brewer, Lia PREM:EX; Bain, Don PREM:EX
Cc: Sanderson, Melanie EDUC:EX; Lindsay-Baugh, Anna EDUC:EX; Lawal, Cassandra CITZ:EX; Hannah, Jeff AEST:EX; Chu, Letitia AEST:EX
Subject: RE: Holding Lines for MLAs- StudentAidBC website- Update #2
Importance: High

Hi Everyone,

Here is an additional update:

- StudentAidBC understands the concerns of the students needing to access their information, and application status – they are working to ensure the system is safe and secure before opening it back up for students
- If students require access to urgent account information, they may contact StudentAidBC directly @ 1-800-561-1818 or via email studentaidbc@gov.bc.ca

Thank you, Michael

Michael Snoddon

Senior Ministerial Advisor

Ministry of Advanced Education & Skills Training

cell: s.17 | email: Michael.Snoddon@gov.bc.ca

From: Snoddon, Michael AEST:EX
Sent: May 3, 2021 8:01 AM
To: May, Ed LASS:EX <Ed.May@leg.bc.ca>; Field, Maddie LASS:EX <Maddie.Field@leg.bc.ca>; Brewer, Lia PREM:EX <Lia.Brewer@gov.bc.ca>; Bain, Don PREM:EX <Don.Bain@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: Sanderson, Melanie EDUC:EX <Melanie.Sanderson@gov.bc.ca>; Lindsay-Baugh, Anna EDUC:EX <Anna.LindsayBaugh@gov.bc.ca>; Lawal, Cassandra CITZ:EX <Kassandra.Lawal@gov.bc.ca>; Hannah, Jeff AEST:EX <Jeff.Hannah@gov.bc.ca>; Chu, Letitia AEST:EX <Letitia.Chu@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: Holding Lines for MLAs- StudentAidBC website- Update #1
Importance: High

Hi Everyone,

Here are the holding lines regarding the StudentAidBC website for MLAs. Once further information is known, will provide an update. If we can request all email correspondence to be sent to AEST.Minister@gov.bc.ca we will make sure a response is sent out with the applicable MLA office cc:d.

- The Ministry of Advanced Education & Skills Training and the Office of the Chief Information Officer is aware of this issue and is investigating.
- At this time, we are not aware of any personal data being compromised.

- We have taken immediate steps to mitigate any further exposure.
- This includes temporarily shutting down affected websites while we work with our IT staff to resolve the issue.

If anyone has any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out.

Thanks, Michael

Michael Snoddon

Senior Ministerial Advisor

Ministry of Advanced Education & Skills Training

cell: s.17 | email: Michael.Snoddon@gov.bc.ca

Snoddon, Michael AEST:EX

From: Snoddon, Michael AEST:EX
Sent: May 3, 2021 10:42 AM
To: s.17
Subject: RE: StudentAidBC Website- Update #2

Hi MLA Oakes,

Here is an additional update:

- StudentAidBC understands the concerns of the students needing to access their information, and application status – they are working to ensure the system is safe and secure before opening it back up for students
- If students require access to urgent account information, they may contact StudentAidBC directly @ 1-800-561-1818 or via email studentaidbc@gov.bc.ca

Thank you, Michael

Michael Snoddon
Senior Ministerial Advisor
Ministry of Advanced Education & Skills Training
cell: s.17 | email: Michael.Snoddon@gov.bc.ca

From: Snoddon, Michael AEST:EX
Sent: May 3, 2021 8:13 AM
To: s.17
Subject: StudentAidBC Website

Hi MLA Oakes,

I hope this email finds you well. Minister Kang has asked that I share the following information regarding a situation with some websites operated by AEST, most notably, StudentAidBC

- At approximately 8:15pm last night, a couple of websites operated by AEST were vandalized.
- The Office of the Chief Information Officer and the AEST Ministry worked quickly to contain the issue.
- The websites have been taken offline while further investigating takes place.

I am hoping that you would be able to share the following key messages with your caucus colleagues and their constituency offices to ensure that constituents receive timely updates. If there is a better contact to utilize, I am happy to contact them.

- The Ministry of Advanced Education & Skills Training and the Office of the Chief Information Officer is aware of this issue and is investigating.
- At this time, the Ministry is not aware of any personal data being compromised.
- The Ministry has taken immediate steps to mitigate any further exposure.
- This includes temporarily shutting down affected websites while they work with our IT staff to resolve the issue.

I am available to clarify any you or your caucus colleagues may have, you can reach me directly on my cell at s.17
s.17

Thank you, Michael

Michael Snoddon

Senior Ministerial Advisor

Ministry of Advanced Education & Skills Training

cell: **s.17** | email: Michael.Snoddon@gov.bc.ca

Snoddon, Michael AEST:EX

From: Snoddon, Michael AEST:EX
Sent: May 3, 2021 10:41 AM
To: s.17
Subject: RE: StudentAidBC Website: Update #2

Hello Hi MLA Furstenau & MLA Olsen,

Here is an additional update:

- We understand the concerns of the students needing to access their information, and application status – we working to ensure the system is safe and secure before opening it back up for students
- If students require access to urgent account information, they may contact StudentAidBC directly @ 1-800-561-1818 or via email studentaidbc@gov.bc.ca

Thank you, Michael

Michael Snoddon
Senior Ministerial Advisor
Ministry of Advanced Education & Skills Training
cell: s.17 | email: Michael.Snoddon@gov.bc.ca

From: Snoddon, Michael AEST:EX
Sent: May 3, 2021 8:15 AM
To: s.17
Subject: StudentAidBC Website

Hi MLA Furstenau & MLA Olsen,

I hope this email finds you well. Minister Kang has asked that I share the following information regarding a situation with some websites operated by AEST, most notably, StudentAidBC

- At approximately 8:15pm last night, a couple of websites operated by AEST were vandalized.
- The Office of the Chief Information Officer and the AEST Ministry worked quickly to contain the issue.
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I am hoping that you would be able to share the following key messages with your constituency offices to ensure that constituents receive timely updates. If there is a better contact to utilize, I am happy to contact them.

- The Ministry of Advanced Education & Skills Training and the Office of the Chief Information Officer is aware of this issue and is investigating.
- At this time, the Ministry is not aware of any personal data being compromised.
- The Ministry has taken immediate steps to mitigate any further exposure.
- This includes temporarily shutting down affected websites while they work with our IT staff to resolve the issue.

I am available to clarify any questions you may have, you can reach me directly on my cell at s.17

Thank you, Michael

Michael Snoddon

Senior Ministerial Advisor

Ministry of Advanced Education & Skills Training

cell: **s.17** | email: Michael.Snoddon@gov.bc.ca

Snoddon, Michael AEST:EX

From: Snoddon, Michael AEST:EX
Sent: May 3, 2021 10:38 AM
To: Berndt, Eric GCPE:EX
Subject: RE: updated follow up lines

This is good for me.

From: Berndt, Eric GCPE:EX <Eric.Berndt@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: May 3, 2021 10:32 AM
To: Snoddon, Michael AEST:EX <Michael.Snoddon@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: updated follow up lines

Hi there,
Program has approved this for the question about when the sites will be up and running and provided info on the Student Aid
You okay with that/.. It's only global who have asked.

*We understand the concerns of the students needing to access their information – we working to ensure the system is safe and secure before opening it back up for students
If students require access to urgent account information, they may contact StudentAid BC directly @ 1-800-561-1818 or via email studentaidbc@gov.bc.ca*

From: Ted Field <Ted.Field@globalnews.ca>
Sent: May 3, 2021 9:04 AM
To: Berndt, Eric GCPE:EX <Eric.Berndt@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: Fernandes, Jennifer GCPE:EX <Jennifer.Fernandes@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: RE: Student Aid hacking

[EXTERNAL] This email came from an external source. Only open attachments or links that you are expecting from a known sender.

Thanks,

Any idea when the site might be operational.

Also, any advice for students trying to access information that they used to get on the site?

-

From: Berndt, Eric GCPE:EX <Eric.Berndt@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: Monday, May 3, 2021 8:50 AM
To: Claire Fenton <Claire.Fenton@globalnews.ca>; Jordan Armstrong <jordan.armstrong@globalnews.ca>; Ted Field <Ted.Field@globalnews.ca>; Toby Kerr <toby.kerr@globalnews.ca>

Cc: Fernandes, Jennifer GCPE:EX <Jennifer.Fernandes@gov.bc.ca>

Subject: FW: Student Aid hacking

This email is from an EXTERNAL SENDER | Ce courriel provient d'un EXPÉDITEUR EXTERNE

Hello Claire, Jordan, Ted and Toby

I am following up to your request last night with the following statement

The Ministry of Advanced Education & Skills Training and the Office of the Chief Information Officer is aware of this issue and is investigating. At this time, we are not aware of any personal data being compromised. We have taken immediate steps to mitigate any further exposure. This includes temporarily shutting down affected websites while we work with our IT staff to resolve the issue.

Thanks

Eric Berndt MA, APR (he/him)
Communications Director
Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Training
Mobile: 250 208 8438
eric.berndt@gov.bc.ca

From: Claire Fenton <Claire.Fenton@globalnews.ca>
Date: May 2, 2021 at 9:33:59 PM PDT
To: "Byers, Lindsay PREM:EX" <Lindsay.Byers@gov.bc.ca>,
Subject: Student Aid hacking

[EXTERNAL] This email came from an external source. Only open attachments or links that you are expecting from a known sender.

Hi Lindsay,

Wondering if the government has any information on the hacking of the Student Aid website.

Has any personal information been compromised and what should those people know about the hacking?

Thank you,

Please reply all.

Claire Fenton
Producer

Corus Entertainment Inc. 7850 Enterprise St. Burnaby, BC

T: 778-945-9103

E: claire.fenton@globalnews.ca



Snoddon, Michael AEST:EX

From: Snoddon, Michael AEST:EX
Sent: May 3, 2021 8:03 AM
To: Berndt, Eric GCPE:EX
Subject: RE: SABC Twitter account?

Keep the messaging tight- should only be using messaging as approved by you.

From: Berndt, Eric GCPE:EX <Eric.Berndt@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: May 3, 2021 8:02 AM
To: Snoddon, Michael AEST:EX <Michael.Snoddon@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: FW: SABC Twitter account?

My preference is they use our media statement only.. Thoughts?

From: McConnan, Kelly AEST:EX <Kelly.McConnan@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: May 3, 2021 7:57 AM
To: Berndt, Eric GCPE:EX <Eric.Berndt@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: Brownrigg, Caitlin AEST:EX <Caitlin.Brownrigg@gov.bc.ca>; Lust, Monica AEST:EX <Monica.Lust@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: RE: SABC Twitter account?

Hi Eric – I am cc'ng Caitlin Brownrigg – her team in the Technology Branch is responsible. That said, I've just asked my team to develop the wording for update for twitter and for an email to our external stakeholder. Does GCPE want to provide us with the preferred language or should we use the language Marlowe Stone has provided as CIO?

Other folks will be sending email updates to their external stakeholders – e.g. PTIB (Monica Lust/Tony Loughran) and assume we want consistency.

Note: here is proposed PTIB email language: *Dear PTIB stakeholder. Please be advised the PTIB website, as well as several other government websites, was vandalized late on Sunday. The website, including the Institution Portal and all upload functionality, is unavailable while investigations continue. We will provide more information as soon as possible.*

CC'ng Monica Lust for PTIB.

Welcome aboard!
Kelly

From: Berndt, Eric GCPE:EX <Eric.Berndt@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: May 3, 2021 7:51 AM
To: McConnan, Kelly AEST:EX <Kelly.McConnan@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: SABC Twitter account?
Importance: High

Hi there,
Can you tell me who runs the SABC Twitter account? I am looking to get some messaging up there based on reports of website vandalism.

Thanks

Eric

Eric Berndt MA, APR (he/him)

Communications Director

Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Training

Mobile: 250 208 8438

eric.berndt@gov.bc.ca

Snoddon, Michael AEST:EX

From: Snoddon, Michael AEST:EX
Sent: May 3, 2021 7:51 AM
To: Kang.MLA, Anne LASS:EX; Lord, Ngaire AEST:EX
Cc: Chu, Letitia AEST:EX; Hannah, Jeff AEST:EX
Subject: RE: StudentAid BC/ PTIB/ LiveleanBC websites

Importance: High

Hi all,

Just an update on some new holding lines:

- The Ministry of Advanced Education & Skills Training and the Office of the Chief Information Officer is aware of this issue and is investigating.
- At this time, we are not aware of any personal data being compromised.
- We have taken immediate steps to mitigate any further exposure.
- This includes temporarily shutting down affected websites while we work with our IT staff to resolve the issue.

Further updates will come throughout the day

If anyone has any questions, please don't hesitate to call

Michael

Michael Snoddon

Senior Ministerial Advisor

Ministry of Advanced Education & Skills Training

cell: s.17 | email: Michael.Snoddon@gov.bc.ca

From: Snoddon, Michael AEST:EX
Sent: May 3, 2021 7:30 AM
To: Kang.MLA, Anne LASS:EX <Anne.Kang.MLA@leg.bc.ca>; Lord, Ngaire AEST:EX <Ngaire.Lord@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: Chu, Letitia AEST:EX <Letitia.Chu@gov.bc.ca>; Hannah, Jeff AEST:EX <Jeff.Hannah@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: StudentAid BC/ PTIB/ LiveleanBC websites
Importance: High

Hi CO & MO

Please forward all emails regarding the above websites to the Min general inbox asap.

If you receive calls- here are the holding lines at this time:

- The Ministry of Advanced Education & Skills Training and the Office of the Chief Information Officer is aware of this issue and is investigating.

- We have taken immediate steps to mitigate any exposure to the government network or loss of information.
- This includes temporarily shutting down affected websites while we work with our IT staff to resolve the issue.

Further updates will come throughout the day

If anyone has any questions, please don't hesitate to call

Michael

Michael Snoddon

Senior Ministerial Advisor

Ministry of Advanced Education & Skills Training

cell: s.17 | email: Michael.Snoddon@gov.bc.ca

Snoddon, Michael AEST:EX

From: Snoddon, Michael AEST:EX
Sent: May 3, 2021 7:49 AM
To: Berndt, Eric GCPE:EX
Subject: RE: Holding lines

Approved

From: Berndt, Eric GCPE:EX <Eric.Berndt@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: May 3, 2021 7:48 AM
To: Snoddon, Michael AEST:EX <Michael.Snoddon@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: FW: Holding lines

You good with this

From: Stewart, Courtney GCPE:EX <Courtney.Stewart@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: May 3, 2021 7:46 AM
To: Berndt, Eric GCPE:EX <Eric.Berndt@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: Olson, Michael GCPE:EX <Michael.Olson@gov.bc.ca>; Lawal, Cassandra CITZ:EX <Kassandra.Lawal@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: RE: Holding lines

Eric, this is approved by the Chief Information Officer:

- The Ministry of Advanced Education & Skills Training and the Office of the Chief Information Officer is aware of this issue and is investigating.
- At this time, we are not aware of any personal data being compromised.
- We have taken immediate steps to mitigate any further exposure.
- This includes temporarily shutting down affected websites while we work with our IT staff to resolve the issue.

From: Berndt, Eric GCPE:EX <Eric.Berndt@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: May 3, 2021 7:11 AM
To: Stewart, Courtney GCPE:EX <Courtney.Stewart@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: Fwd: Holding lines

Hi there, Our MO made some edits.
I think they work. Hoping you can ask your folks

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Snoddon, Michael AEST:EX" <Michael.Snoddon@gov.bc.ca>
Date: May 3, 2021 at 7:09:22 AM PDT

To: "Berndt, Eric GCPE:EX" <Eric.Berndt@gov.bc.ca>

Subject: RE: Holding lines

Edited.

- The Ministry of Advanced Education & Skills Training and the Office of the Chief Information Officer is aware of this issue and is investigating.
- We have taken immediate steps to mitigate any exposure to the government network or loss of information.
- This includes temporarily shutting down affected websites while we work with our IT staff to resolve the issue.

From: Berndt, Eric GCPE:EX <Eric.Berndt@gov.bc.ca>

Sent: May 3, 2021 7:07 AM

To: Snoddon, Michael AEST:EX <Michael.Snoddon@gov.bc.ca>

Subject: Re: Holding lines

Slight tweak just waiting for their adm and ours

Incidents of this nature are taken very seriously.

- The Office of the Chief Information Officer is aware of this issue and is investigating.
- At this time, there is no evidence to suggest personal data has been compromised.
- We have taken immediate steps to mitigate any exposure to the government network or loss of information.
- This includes temporarily shutting down the two affected websites while we work with our staff and vendors to resolve the issue.

Sent from my iPhone

On May 3, 2021, at 7:05 AM, Snoddon, Michael AEST:EX <Michael.Snoddon@gov.bc.ca> wrote:

If The lines we developed last night work, and they are good with it- lets do it.

From: Berndt, Eric GCPE:EX <Eric.Berndt@gov.bc.ca>

Sent: May 3, 2021 6:09 AM

To: Snoddon, Michael AEST:EX <Michael.Snoddon@gov.bc.ca>

Subject: Fwd: Holding lines

These are the lines from CITZ, just waiting to confirm

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Stewart, Courtney GCPE:EX" <Courtney.Stewart@gov.bc.ca>
Date: May 2, 2021 at 10:26:45 PM PDT
To: "Berndt, Eric GCPE:EX" <Eric.Berndt@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: "Olson, Michael GCPE:EX" <Michael.Olson@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: **Holding lines**

Hi Eric,

Here are our holding lines. I'm now told if your ministry wants to acknowledge the incident, the line you sent earlier works. But again, it's better to wait until we know full scope and can confirm the issue is contained.

When we know more – Holding lines:

- The Office of the Chief Information Officer is aware of this issue and monitoring the situation.
- There is no evidence to suggest government's network has been impacted. We can also confirm no personal data has been compromised.
- The Office of the Chief Information Officer is constantly evaluating potential threats – with systems monitoring 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
- In the event of a threat against the provincial government website or email, we take immediate steps to mitigate the exposure to the government network and loss of information.
- This may include temporarily disabling our website(s) and email servers while we work to resolve the issue.

<image003.png>

Courtney Stewart

Communications Director | Government Communications and Public Engagement

Ministry of Citizens' Services

Ph: 778-698-8755 | Cell: 250-920-5104

courtney.stewart@gov.bc.ca