

Incident Report

External Issue Impacting the IFA 1, IFA 2 and Viking Link Intraday auctions



DISTRIBUTION	TSOs/Market
VERSION	1
DATED	January 14, 2025

Executive summary

An incident occurred on the 12th of January which was caused by a type of cyber attack called a Distributed Denial of Service (DDoS) attack, targeting a full range of IP addresses used by our IT infrastructure service provider. JAO was not directly targeted as such but impacted consequently. This cyberattack impacted the VikingLink, IFA 1 and IFA 2 Intraday auctions.

Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	2
CONTENTS	3
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	4
INTRODUCTION.....	4
OPERATIONAL PROCESS AND TIMINGS	5
Normal process and system behaviour	5
Wrong system behaviour	5
Incident	6
Involved TSO	6
Impacted borders	6
Timeline	6
Communication	8
HANDLING OF THE INCIDENT – EVALUATION	8
Detecting the issue	8
Immediate steps taken to return to normal business operation	8
CLAIMS.....	8
LESSONS LEARNT AND RECOMMENDED FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS.....	8
Probability that it will happen again.	9
Closing remarks	9
ANNEXES.....	10

List of abbreviations

AR: Allocation Result

ATC: Available Transfer Capacity

DDoS: Distributed Denial of Service

Auction Tool Operator UI: JAO's auction tool Operator User Interface

GB: Great Britain

JAO: Joint Allocation Office

MP(s): Market Participant(s)

PA: Programming Authorizations / Rights Documents

TSO: Transmission System Operators

TAR: Total Allocation Results

RNP: Regional Nomination Platform

Introduction

This incident was the result of a Distributed Denial of Service (DDoS) attack targeting a full range of IP addresses used by our IT infrastructure service provider. JAO was not directly targeted as such but impacted because of the attack. This led to intermittent service disruptions during the attack window. Our service provider promptly reacted, took the necessary measures and restored their service within an hour.

The availability of affected services was compromised for approximately one hour from 13:20 to 14:20.

Impacted auctions:

- VKL-D1<>GB-I-ID1620-250112-01
- IF1-FR<>GB-I-ID1620-250112-01
- IF2-FR<>GB-I-ID1620-250112-01

Operational process and timings

To comprehend the impact of the triggering issue and its subsequent chain of events leading to the operational incident outlined in this chapter, we'll briefly describe the normal process alongside its timings.

Normal process and system behaviour

Under normal circumstances, the Auction Tool and JAO's internal systems ensure the smooth run of the auctions, including the bid submission process and the Allocation Results and Rights Documents distribution.

Wrong system behaviour

Due to the DDoS attack, network outages disrupted connectivity to the Auction Tool. As a result, Market Participants had trouble placing their bids for the VKL ID3 D1<>GB, IFA1 FR<>GB, IFA2 FR<>GB (16-20) auctions.

The Operations Team promptly engaged the IT team to resolve the service disruptions and contacted the relevant TSO and the Regional Nomination Platform (RNP) to agree on cancelling the first round of the auctions and run a second round. Due to a manual error, the Rights Documents for the second round were incorrectly generated, resulting in faulty nominations. The corrected version of the PAs was sent shortly after.

JAO is currently in contact with the affected parties to mitigate the effect of the erroneous nomination results.

Description of the incident

Incident

A DDoS attack on one of JAO's service providers, disrupted their clients' network infrastructure, affecting JAO's Auction Tool as a result.

Involved TSO

National Grid

Energinet

Impacted borders

IF1-FR-GB

IF2-FR-GB

VKL-D1-GB

Timeline

Time	Event
09:41	The IT Team member on-call was notified about a network outage that prevented the Operations Team from accessing their internal system.
09:54	Troubleshooting resumed. Issue was resolved; the Operations and IT Teams were able to reconnect successfully.
13:23	Market Participants began calling to report slowness on their end, which prevented them from submitting bids for auctions IF1, IF2, and VKL Intraday auctions ID 1620. The IT Team on-call was contacted
13:28	JAO informs affected TSOs about Market Participants' concerns and, since the auctions were closed at that time and results already published, requests permission for first round cancellation and running of the second round of auctions.
13:40	JAO contacts service provider who confirms the attack was ongoing.
14:00	Since usual communication channel was not available due to mentioned attack, JAO informs the market (or market participants) of the network outage from the backup communication channel.

14:17	RNP was again called to confirm the extension of Nomination deadline and to confirm the timing 14:55 of extension.
14:20	The Operations Team started to create the 2nd round of the affected intraday auctions.
14:27	The IT Team received a notification from the service provider identifying a DDoS attack as the root cause of the issue. Meanwhile, National Grid provided written confirmation to cancel the first round.
14:37-14:38	Market message of 2nd round of Auction opening was published. The second round of the auctions with the following IDs were opened: VKL-D1<>GB-I-ID1620-250112-02 IF1-FR<>GB-I-ID1620-250112-02 IF2-FR<>GB-I-ID1620-250112-02
14:47-14:49	Bid submission gate was closed for IF1 FR – GB (14:47) and IF1 GB – FR and IF2 FR<>GB (14:49).
14:51-14:53	Rights Documents were generated and sent by the Operations Team: IFA1 - 14:51 (Fully accepted) VKL - 14:52 (Fully rejected) IFA2 - 14:53 (Fully rejected)
14:56	The nomination deadline has passed, and inconsistencies were identified in the PAs. RNP contacted the Operations Team to report that two MPs were unable to nominate their capacity.
14:57	The Operations Team sent an email requesting the list of parties that successfully nominated.
15:08	The Operations Team received a negative acknowledgment from RNP immediately after sending the PA. The Operations Team forwarded the PA directly via backup method for both IFA and VKL. RNP quickly informed the Operations Team that the rejection occurred due to an allocation constraint issue, as the PA displayed more capacity than the available ATC.
15:39-15:40	First round of IF2 FR<>GB and VKL GB<>D1 auctions were cancelled.
16:25	It was agreed with National Grid to generate new PAs for the second round of auctions, which would be used for nominating capacity for the final hour of the day (19:00–20:00). However, RNP specified that the PAs must be received by 16:45 for VKL and 16:55 for IFAs.
16:34	The list of nominations was received by the TSO, and we have confirmed on our side that these parties only participated on the 1st round (cancelled).
16:41-16:46	Newly generated PAs were sent for VKL (16:41) and for IFA2 (16:46). The TSO immediately informed us that they couldn't upload the PA for VKL D1-GB. We concluded that this might be because some MPs had already nominated their capacity, and those nominations weren't included in the new file.

16:55	TSO informed JAO that the deadline to upload the correct file is 17:30. Due to the limited time window, there was not sufficient time to implement the workaround in the system.
17:30	The incident has been resolved; however, some participants were unable to submit nominations.
18:38	A follow-up email regarding the incident was sent to both National Grid and RNP, outlining which parties were wrongly allocated capacity according to the wrong PAs sent, based on the list of nominations provided by the TSOs.

Communication

JAO promptly notified Market Participants about an issue that could impact their participation in the auctions. After several Market Participants were unable to participate in the first round of the auctions, JAO informed the market about the creation of the second round.

Handling of the incident – evaluation

Detecting the issue

As soon as Market Participants informed JAO about the system's slowness, JAO initiated troubleshooting. IT team collaborated with JAO's service provider to pinpoint and resolve the identified issues, ensuring a prompt resolution.

Immediate steps taken to return to normal business operation

Claims

The Operations Team received several phone calls, emails and service desk tickets from the Market Participants asking for more information about the incident.

Lessons learnt and recommended follow-up actions

Since it was an external attack, JAO is currently waiting for its supplier to share the potential mitigating measures to be taken in case this scenario occurs again.

Probability that it will happen again.

Mitigating measures will be provided by JAO's service provider and JAO will follow up on it.

Closing remarks

JAO acknowledges the inconvenience caused by the cyber attack and is committed to improving services for stakeholders.

Annexes

List of Market Messages:

Communication Issues - Please Download RDs from Trader UI

[Message board | JAO S.A. Leading service provider for TSOs](#)

Solved - Communication Issues

[Message board | JAO S.A. Leading service provider for TSOs](#)

VKL and IFA1&2 ID3 2nd round

[Message board | JAO S.A. Leading service provider for TSOs](#)

2nd round for Intraday Auction

[Message board | JAO S.A. Leading service provider for TSOs](#)

New version of Rights Documents

[Message board | JAO S.A. Leading service provider for TSOs](#)