



May 20, 2020

VIA CERTIFIED MAIL - RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED

To: Craig Denson
CEO
PTGi International Carrier Services, Inc.
4115 Wisconsin Avenue
Suite 203
Washington, DC 20016

Re: Official Correspondence from the Federal Communications Commission and Federal Trade Commission

Dear Mr. Denson,

We have determined that PTGi International Carrier Services, Inc. (PTGi) is apparently routing and transmitting Novel Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) scam robocall traffic originating from at least one wholesale provider in Germany that your company has refused to identify. **We request that you cease routing and transmitting such traffic immediately.**

On March 13, 2020, the President declared a national emergency concerning the COVID-19 outbreak.¹ Fraudsters and unscrupulous actors have taken advantage of this national health crisis to send scam robocalls to consumers across the United States. These unwanted robocalls include messages alleging that recipients have been charged \$399 for tech support services but may receive a refund by responding to the robocall. They also include robocalls falsely claiming to come from the United States Social Security Administration threatening cutoff of SSA benefits. This activity has the potential to inflict severe harm on consumers. Our agencies will aggressively pursue legal action against unlawful robocallers and, where appropriate, pursue legal action against voice providers routing or transmitting such traffic on their networks.²

Investigations conducted by our agencies, in conjunction with the USTelecom Industry Traceback Group, revealed that PTGi is a gateway voice provider for apparently fraudulent

¹ Proclamation on Declaring a National Emergency Concerning the Novel Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) Outbreak, The White House (Mar. 13, 2020), <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/proclamation-declaring-national-emergency-concerning-novel-coronavirus-disease-covid-19-outbreak/>.

² The Federal Trade Commission recently obtained a temporary restraining order and a preliminary injunction against a VoIP provider, Globex Telecom, for assisting and facilitating illegal robocalls. <https://www.ftc.gov/news-events/press-releases/2019/12/court-halts-operations-voip-service-provider-after-ftc-ohio>.

COVID-19 robocalls originating from a Germany-based wholesale provider, which your company refused to identify by name. We note that your company's refusal to disclose to the Industry Traceback Group the name of the wholesale provider makes it difficult for U.S. network providers to protect themselves against illegal robocall traffic from that entity. This is particularly problematic for malicious robocalls capitalizing on public anxiety about the ongoing global health crisis. We will take all necessary and appropriate action to prevent these robocalls from entering U.S. networks.

If after 48 hours of issuance of this letter PTGi continues to route or transmit harmful robocall traffic from the entity/entities involved in these campaigns, the FCC will authorize other U.S. voice providers to block all calls from PTGi and take any other steps as needed to prevent further transmission of unlawful calls from PTGi, and we will evaluate whether further action is appropriate in connection with your activity.

Please direct any inquiries regarding this letter to Kristi Thompson of the FCC at Kristi.thompson@fcc.gov or 202-418-1318; or to James Evans of the FTC at james.evans@ftc.gov or 202-326-2026.

Sincerely,



Rosemary C. Harold
Chief, Enforcement Bureau
Federal Communications Commission



Lois C. Greisman
Associate Director, Division of Marketing
Practices
Federal Trade Commission