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**For Immediate Release**

**FCC FINES SCAMMERBLASTER \$116 MILLION FOR ILLEGAL ROBOCALLS MADE TO GENERATE TOLL FREE DIALING FEES**

WASHINGTON, September 21, 2023—The Federal Communications Commission today adopted a \$116,156,250 fine against a group of parties responsible for nearly 10 million robocalls made for the purposes of generating toll free dialing fees. The FCC’s investigation revealed the parties behind the calls included Thomas Dorsher, ChariTel, OnTel, and ScammerBlaster (all of which are jointly liable for the fine). These parties, together the Dorsher Enterprise, presented themselves as a campaign *against* scam robocalls while in fact illegally robocalling toll free numbers.

The Dorsher Enterprise specifically targeted toll free numbers with robocalls because it was compensated for every call to a toll free number. When a caller makes a toll free call, the called party compensates its toll free service provider for connecting the call to the called party. The toll free service provider, in turn, compensates the caller’s local exchange carrier for connecting the call to the toll free service provider. In this case, the local exchange carrier that received the fees generated from “pumping” robocalls to toll free numbers shared those fees as credits with the Dorsher Enterprise.

The Dorsher Enterprise used the credits generated from robocalling toll free numbers to fund telephony denial of service (TDoS) attacks on other entities. Independently of the FCC’s action, on November 22, 2022, a federal grand jury indicted Dorsher and others on multiple federal criminal counts related to these TDoS attacks. DHS’s Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency has [warned](#) that TDoS attacks present a unique challenge to public safety stakeholders and can severely impede a jurisdiction’s ability to provide emergency response services.

The law expressly prohibits robocalls made to recipients who are charged for the call—such as subscribers to toll free numbers—unless the caller has prior express consent or there is an emergency purpose. The FCC’s Enforcement Bureau investigation found that, over a two-month span in 2021, the Dorsher Enterprise made 9,763,599 prerecorded voice message calls to toll free numbers without prior express consent or an emergency purpose. The prerecorded voice messages ranted about the harms associated with scam calls and directed the recipients to report such calls to government regulators, telephone carriers, and ScammerBlaster. The Industry Traceback Group traced the calls to Mr. Dorsher and ChariTel, and the FCC’s investigation revealed OnTel’s and ScammerBlaster’s involvement in the scheme.

Action by the Commission September 21, 2023 by Forfeiture Order (FCC 23-77).  
Chairwoman Rosenworcel, Commissioners Carr, Starks, and Simington approving.  
Chairwoman Rosenworcel, Commissioner Starks issuing separate statements.

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*This is an unofficial announcement of Commission action. Release of the full text of a Commission order constitutes official action. See MCI v. FCC, 515 F.2d 385 (D.C. Cir. 1974).*