STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

ROY COOPER
GOVERNOR

J. ERIC BOYETTE
SECRETARY

October 4, 2022

Memorandum To: Division Engineers

Memorandum From: Wiley W. Jones III, PE
State Construction Engineer

DocuSigned by:
Wiley W Jones III
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Subject: Portable Changeable Messaging Sign Tampering

In the last several years, there have been multiple instances of someone gaining access or hacking into a Portable Changeable Message Sign (PCMS) controller and placing unauthorized messages. In addition to potentially offensive or inappropriate messages being displayed to the public, such tampering could also present a significant safety concern.

Section 1089-7(D) of the Standard Specifications outlines the measures that should be taken to avoid unauthorized programming of the controller. To reduce the chance of additional message tampering, Department field staff should coordinate with Contractors to ensure that appropriate measures are being taken. These measures include:

- Ensure controllers are programmed with password protection and that password is not displayed anywhere on the PCMS
- Ensure that the factory password has been changed from the default
- Ensure the controller is stored in a lockable, weather and vandal resist box and that the box is locked

Department staff should periodically verify that these measures are in place throughout the PCMS deployment. It is also recommended that this topic be covered at future preconstruction conferences to ensure awareness of the necessary measures.

Please refer any questions to Don Parker, PE, Work Zone Traffic Control Section at (919)814-4935 or daparker@ncdot.gov.

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