

## SIG Lesson Learned #15 -- Cautionary Tale: Internet Electrons Do Actually Leave a Footprint Forever

I have often heard people say that Internet activity leaves a footprint forever. After a recent misconduct review, I want to take a few moments to share a story that vividly illustrates this Internet issue to use as a cautionary tale to potentially prevent similar future misconduct allegations, as well as applicability to general Internet use.

Public media reports alleged SC State government email addresses were contained in leaked hacked information from an adult website. Review of the electronic data dumped on the public Internet identified transactions originating from SC State government IP addresses. The level of detail included the State employee's specific email account used, State or personal, to access a State IP address; transaction date; transaction time *to the second*; and *the longitude/latitude of the device accessing the state IP address*. All these transactions occurred many years ago.

Lessons learned from concrete examples can resonate with employees much longer than words in a generic code of conduct.