

# Suspected Ryuk ransomware attack locks down Adelaide's City of Onkaparinga council

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A council in Adelaide's south is up and running again after cyber attack just before Christmas locked down its IT systems and forced staff to start their holidays earlier than planned.

## Key points:

- The City of Onkaparinga council says some libraries still affected after a cyber attack in December
- The council says its systems were infected with Ryuk ransomware, which hits organisations worldwide
- An IT expert says \$3.7m in ransom has been paid out by businesses around the world since 2018

City of Onkaparinga mayor Erin Thompson said its systems fell victim to the so-called Ryuk ransomware, which has also hit "other government organisations around the world", on December 14.

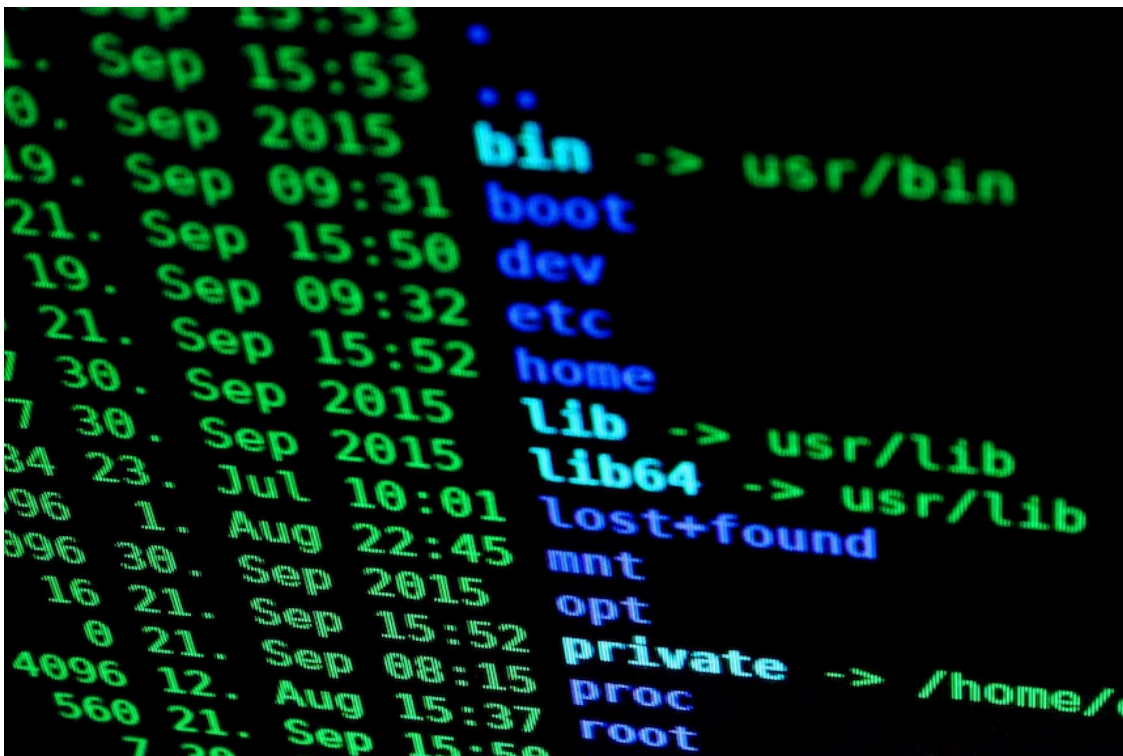
"It disabled quite few of our systems," she told [ABC Radio Adelaide](#).

"Our phones and our emails were down for a period of time and our IT guys had to go through and individually restore every server and every different device across the council.

"It was a big hit for the council and it took a lot to get it up and running."

Ms Thompson said public computers and printers at its libraries would remain out of order for the next day or two.

She said the attack occurred while the council was operating with skeleton staff, and many took the opportunity to start their leave earlier in response.



The council's IT systems needed to be individually restored after the cyber attack. (Supplied: Pixabay)

## Virus also hit NOLA

Ms Thompson said it was the same ransomware that hit the City of New Orleans in mid-December.

"It would have been particularly tough for them because they've also got police and hospital services," she said.

"We're still investigating what happened here, but we are about to launch a new IT system anyway.

"We know that it has far stronger security elements in place and that if it had been in place already, this probably wouldn't have happened."

The council said forensic investigations indicated that no personal information had been compromised in the attack.

## Ransomware draws '\$3.7m'

Adelaide technology consultant Richard Pascoe said Ryuk had been used to hit more than 100 businesses since 2018 and had caused losses of some \$3.7 million so far.

"If it was Ryuk, and there's been lots of examples around the world, there is ransom written into the virus," he said.

"When they lock everything down you get a message on the screen telling you how to go along and pay that ransom, and then you basically get a key back that tells you how to unlock everything."

Mr Pascoe said the City of Onkaparinga was the first Adelaide organisation he had heard of that had been affected.

"They would have already been infected and somebody would have opened an email, simple as that, which would have triggered the whole virus to be set off in the council," he said.

Ms Thompson said the council had not been asked for a ransom, but had that happened, "it would have been a matter for our insurance".

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Source: <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-01-06/city-of-onkaparinga-hit-by-ryuk-ransomware/11843598>