

March 14, 2022

MAINFRAME “STRONG PASSWORD” ENHANCEMENTS – June 5, 2022

WHAT WILL HAPPEN

Changes will be made to the mainframe RACF Security System to require that each **NEW** 8 character password contains 1 upper case letter, 1 lower case letter, 1 numeric and 1 special character:

Special Characters for this project are defined as the following characters only:

.	!	>	&	
<	*	?	–	%
+	-	:	=	

NOTE: the national symbols, #, @, \$ are also treated as special characters.

WHY IS THIS HAPPENING?

The current mainframe RACF passwords can only be set with characters A-Z, 0-9, and national symbols #@\$. All lowercase alphabetic characters are translated to uppercase. RACF password length maximum is 8 characters long. The possible combinations of passwords are 39 X 8, or 5,352,009,260,481. The password complexity is low and vulnerable to security attacks.

The new mainframe ‘strong password’ standard will increase the password complexity and decrease the state’s vulnerability to security attacks.